



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held at the Civic
Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN on
TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 7.00 PM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Couldrick', written in a cursive style.

Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive
Published on 14 September 2015

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillors

Pauline Helliar-Symons (Chairman)	Shahid Younis (Vice-Chairman)	Laura Blumenthal
Chris Bowring	Lindsay Ferris	Ken Miall
Bill Soane	Alison Swaddle	

Substitutes

Prue Bray	Tom McCann	Malcolm Richards
Bob Wyatt		

Parent Governor Representatives

Vacancy

Diocesan Representatives

Vacancy, Roman Catholic Representative

Vacancy, C of E Representative

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
18.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence	
19.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 July 2015.	7 - 16
20.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest	
21.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	

22.		MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any member questions	
23.	None Specific	THE PROCESS OF SCHOOL BUDGET SETTING AND FUNDING ALLOCATION To receive and consider a verbal report outlining the process of school budget setting and funding allocation.	Verbal Report
24.	None Specific	THE WORK OF THE CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP To receive and consider a report detailing the work of the Children's Partnership.	17 - 28
25.	None Specific	UPDATE ON THE DRAFT PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES STRATEGY To receive and consider a verbal report giving an update on the draft Primary School Places Strategy.	Verbal Report
26.	None Specific	ANNUAL REPORT OF CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD To receive and consider a report detailing the work undertaken by Corporate Parenting Board.	29 - 58
27.	None Specific	CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE MONITORING To receive and consider a report giving details of the Children's Services performance indicators, in the Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report.	59 - 68
28.		SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE - OFSTED REPORTS To receive and consider two reports on School Performance – see items 28.1 and 28.2. No Ofsted inspection reports have been published since the last meeting.	
28.1	None Specific	Virtual School Report To receive and consider a report on the Virtual School.	69 - 90
28.2	None Specific	Secondary Schools Achievement Results 2015 To receive a verbal update on the recently published secondary school achievement results for 2015.	Verbal Report
29.		COMMITTEE'S FORWARD PROGRAMME To receive the current work programme for the Committee and to consider any amendments or additions.	91 - 98
30.		ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading	

CONTACT OFFICER

Luciane Bowker

Tel

Email

Postal Address

Democratic Services Officer

0118 974 6091

luciane.bowker@wokingham.gov.uk

Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

This page is intentionally left blank

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JULY 2015 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.35 PM

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Pauline Helliar-Symons (Chairman), Lindsay Ferris, Ken Miall, Bill Soane, Alison Swaddle and Malcolm Richards

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Ian Pittock and Tim Holton, Chairman Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

Officers Present

Tricia Harcourt, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Felicity Budgen, Interim Head of Social Care and Intervention
Judith Ramsden, Director of Children's Services
Kathy Roberts, Service Manager Access and Inclusion
Brian Grady, Head of Strategic Commissioning
Gillian Ward, HR Business Partner (for Item 6)
Gill Walker, Service Manager, Standards in Learning
Joe Kidman, Detective Superintendent, Thames Valley Police (for Item 8)
Linda York, Detective Chief Inspector, Thames Valley Police (for item 8)

60. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Chris Bowring, substituted by Malcolm Richards, and Shahid Younis.

61. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 March 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

62. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest. Pauline Helliar-Symons confirmed that she was no longer doing consultancy work for CfBT Education Trust.

63. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited members of the public to submit questions.

63.1 Lynn Boba has asked the Chairman for Children Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee the following question:

Question

How do you plan to secure Earley places for all 29 children in catchment without places (mentioned in the strategy) with one expansion, considering you still need to follow waiting lists?

Answer

The Council can guarantee that any new capacity created in Earley would be intended to benefit Earley resident children, with the aim that children would not be diverted out of Earley. It is acknowledged though that there are significant challenges that must be addressed. Any plan to increase capacity in Earley will need to take account of a number of factors. The likely impact on diverted children will be one of the most important but the

plan also needs to be affordable, deliverable and create sustainable provision in the long term. Since the diverted children live in the designated areas of a number of schools, there is no single school where they would have priority as a right over children living outside the Earley area. Also, as children can be added to waiting lists (and those waiting lists must be re-ranked at that point) the impact of additional places cannot be known until the point of allocation. A single school site may though largely address these issues provided the scheme is affordable, deliverable and located so most Earley residents are sufficiently close to have priority over residents in other areas.

I know that you and other parents have been working with Brian Grady on this issue and hope that a satisfactory resolution can be found.

63.2 Kathryn Mitchell has asked the Chairman for Children Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee the following question:

Question

What happens if more children move in, meeting criterion C & D and bump some of the original 29 further down the lists?

Answer

The developing primary school provision strategy is looking closely at where primary places are required over the next three years. It will consider the likely impact of new families with children moving into the area (and it is acknowledged that one effect of new families moving into an area could be that children already on waiting lists will have a lower waiting list rank as a result). Further movement into the designated area of an already oversubscribed school would not though necessarily prompt further action relating to that school. Any new provision needs to be deliverable, affordable and sustainable in the long term and will therefore need to be focused, probably on one school.

As noted above the immediate impact of further applications for places could be that children on the waiting list of a particular school would drop to a lower position. In accordance with the statutory School Admissions Code (the Code) allocations must be made in accordance with the determined admissions arrangements (section 2.7 of the Code) and every time a new child is added to the waiting list the list must be "ranked again in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria" (section 2.14 of the Code). This means that where children meet the requirements of a higher criterion they will have a higher priority than a child meeting the requirements of a lower priority criterion. Within each criterion the "tie breaker" – radial distance from the school site - determines an individual child's rank or priority relative to other children in that criterion.

I know that you and other parents have been working with Brian Grady, on this issue and hope that a satisfactory resolution can be found.

64. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

65. DELIVERING EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN - RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 13 to 18 giving an update on the impact of the recruitment and retention strategy for Social Workers.

Gillian Ward, HR Business Partner presented the report, which gave details of the process and the outcomes of the recent recruitment campaign in Australia. Five senior social workers have successfully been recruited and are due to start over in the next few weeks. A comprehensive integration programme has been set up to make sure they are welcomed and settled in the UK, as it is crucial that they are retained. The relocation costs they can claim are at the same level and on a similar basis, to that given to someone relocating within the UK.

Felicity Budgen also reported that they have been successful in recruiting newly qualified social workers, who are attracted to Wokingham by the training/development package that is being offered. The turnover of social workers has now reduced for 33% to 9%.

RESOLVED: That the update report on the recruitment and retention strategy which is crucial to delivering effective safeguarding services for children be noted and that Officers be thanked for the work that had been done to address these problems.

66. DELIVERING EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN - EARLY YEARS HELP AND INNOVATIONS PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 19 to 22 giving an update on the progress of the Early Help and Innovations Programme and the development of the Early Help Hub.

Brain Grady, Head of Commissioning, explained that Wokingham is now in Phase 2 of the Programme to ensure that the model is fully embedded in every day practice. This new way of working in partnership with families within the clear practice framework has led to the development of an Early Help Hub as part of the 'front door initiative'. This is a multi-agency group, which works with families to signpost to the relevant services where targeted intervention support is needed.

RESOLVED: That the update report on the Early Help and Innovations Programme, as part of delivering effective safeguarding services for children be noted, and that a report on the impact/outcomes of the programme be presented to the October meeting of the Committee.

67. DELIVERING EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING SERVICES - DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

The Committee received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 23 to 26, giving an update on the development of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Wokingham.

Felicity Budgen, Head of Social Care and Intervention, presented the report and explained that MASHs are part of a national initiative and that a decision had been made that all the six Berkshire Local Authorities would set up individual MASHs. Following work on the Early Help and Innovations Programme in Wokingham where the Triage and Early Help Hubs have been developed, Wokingham is in a good position to set up a MASH.

MASHs are multi-agency hubs which provide information sharing arrangements across all agencies involved in safeguarding, ie police, health, local authority. Their work should lead to the early identification and understanding of potential risk to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, so that the best decision can be made about any intervention necessary.

The Officers from the Thames Valley Police explained that although the development of the individual MASHs is in its infancy, Project and Programme Managers have been appointed to link practice across Berkshire. The Local Authority has appointed a development manager to work with the hub. The heart of the process is to protect confidentiality, but to share pieces information, which when added up may indicate there is problem which may show a child in need.

During the discussion the following comments/clarifications were made:

- All information given is recorded and considered, even hearsay, although action may not be required;
- MASH does not create new information it just share information already held by the various agencies;
- Thames Valley Police are already one of the Council's strategic partners, making it easier to set up a local MASH;
- As well as the 6 MASHs across Berkshire there will be one covering the whole of the area where information can be exchanged on a wider basis, improving the existing partnership working across all the Local Authorities;
- National guidance requires the passing on of information if families move to other Local Authority areas;
- Clinical Commissioning Groups are engaged in the MASH Strategic Implementation Board, so GPs and hospitals are involved;
- It is known that incidents of sexual exploitation do occur in the Borough , but there is multi-agency support in place through the Thames Valley Police, and Children's Social Care and individuals have been identified and protected.. Local Safeguarding Children Board has commissioned training for those involved. There is no evidence of the involvement of gangs, but there is a need to remain vigilant to possible internet based exploitation by individuals;
- The risk of radicalisation would be one of the issues raised via the MASHs, where understanding a whole range of risks is part of the work;
- The Thames Valley Police and Children's Services strategic group has a strategy in place to recognise vulnerability, with the preventative Early Help agenda to ensure the right capacity and resources are in place.

RESOLVED: That the update report on the development of a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) be noted and that Officers be thanked for the work that is now being done which gives reassurance that information on vulnerable children is now being shared.

68. DRAFT PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION STRATEGY 2015-2018

The Committee received and considered a report,, set out on Agenda pages 27 to 34, giving an update on the draft Primary School Provision Strategy (2015-2018).

Brain Grady, Head of Commissioning, indicated that the previous three year strategy had identified shortfalls and investment had been made to meet the predicted demand. This strategy was for the next three years and has identified that there are or will be shortfall in the number of Reception places. There are three 'hot spot' areas of concern: in Earley, Woodley and the South West. The shortfall in Earley came to light this year and around 30 parents did not get places at any of the schools they had applied for. The demand shift this year had not been predicted and Internal Audit have been checking the process. This issue is considered in more detail under the next item.

During the discussion the following comments were made:

- From parents' point of view it appears that they have not been given freedom of choice;
- This type of blip may occur in other areas in future, are we in a position to deal with it?
- There were sufficient places in the wider Earley area, but some of the places at the less popular schools had been allocated to those living in Reading Borough because places were not filled by Wokingham Borough residents;
- As Earley is an established area now, with a lot of buy-to-let properties there are a lot of young families moving in and out. Is this trend being looked at in other areas?
- Lessons are being learned and the model is being finessed, but looking at Estate Agent data was not very helpful;

The report indicated that a task and finish group is being set up to give Members the opportunity to oversee the development and implementation of the Strategy, made up as follows:

- Chairman - Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services
- The Executive Member for Children's Services;
- Ward Members from the three 'hotspot' areas;
- A minority party Member
- A Member from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

RESOLVED: That the report on the draft Primary School Provision Strategy (2015-2018) be noted and that Ken Miall be appointed as the Committee's representative on the task and finish group.

69. PRIMARY PLACE PLANNING AND ALLOCATION PROCESS

The Committee received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 35 to 40, detailing the supply and allocation of Reception places in Earley schools, which had been prepared following a scrutiny request referred by the Overview and Management Committee to look at the pupil place planning and processes for the allocation of places.

The Chairman said that there was a genuine concern amongst Members and Officers about what had happened in Earley this year. It appears that there was an increased rate in the movement of young families into the area, which had not been predicted. The area was such that older families were moving out releasing the homes for families with young children.

Brian Grady, Head of Commissioning, presented the report and pointed out that unfortunately some parents in Earley had expressed preferences for four local schools but had not been allocated a place any of them, so had been diverted to schools outside the area. Also, some parents had not used all their preferences which meant they had to be allocated schools outside the area. Once the current issues had been raised, Officers moved quickly to understand the problem and have been working with a group of the affected parents to find a solution.

The report includes the initial findings of the Internal Audit service which had been commissioned to review school place planning and school place projection model. The school projection models and data were tested and validated. No significant errors in either the Primary or Secondary Projection Models were identified and that the Council presently had sufficient school places to meet the requirements across the Borough. Future roll growth is predicting that Reception Year will peak in 2016/17 and then decline. However there is a need to create additional capacity in Earley to meet the short term need.

One of the immediate actions has been to test the entrance requirements for 2016/17 and the Admissions Team have been working with other departments to consider whether or not offers are based on misleading information.

During the discussion, the following comments/clarifications were made:

- There were different 'hotspots' when the first strategy was prepared 3/4 years ago;
- Are Wokingham residents given priority over Reading Borough residents?
Applications from other areas are dealt with in same manner as those from Wokingham residents. If there are places available for non-designated area applicants, they will be allocated based on radial distance, from the school, so Reading residents living close to the boundary may be allocated a place;
- Overall more Reading Borough residents are given places in Wokingham, than in the other direction. The shortfall of places in adjoining local authorities affects the sufficiency provision in Wokingham;
- admission arrangements have to comply strictly with the national policy framework and can only be changed after a consultation process.
- The consultation on the 2017/18 arrangements may include looking at developing shared designated areas in Earley. Also the possibility of allowing Earley residents to put down 6 preferences is being investigated with the Schools Adjudicator;
- Parents should be encouraged to complete the four preferences allowed, but they cannot be forced to do so;
- It is hoped that schools and Members will work to get that message out to parents; Admissions Officers are not allowed to influence parents.

In relation to the issue in Earley of reported 'fraudulent' applications, they were not investigated in those terms, but were identified in the light of misleading information included on applications in relation to the residence requirements. The issue of people moving close to popular schools on a temporary basis or giving a relative's address in order to secure a place has been investigated and some places have been withdrawn, with places filled from the waiting list. A policy framework to allow for better checks and tougher sanctions is being looked into.

It will not be possible to create additional places in Earley for September 2015, as bulge classes require the consent of Headteachers and all sites have significant challenges, which need to be addressed. So the parents currently affected by the short fall in places at the popular schools in Earley, will have to take up the places in the alternative schools offered, but the Strategy is looking to provide additional places in Reception and Year 1 in 2016. This is a compromise solution which has been worked on with the affected parents and should give them the opportunity to move their children back to local Earley schools for Year 1 in September 2016.

The Chairman thanked the parents who had been working with Brian Grady. Officers assured Members that they were working to provide enough places for Wokingham children.

RESOLVED: That the information provided in the report looking at the supply and allocation of Reception places in Earley schools for September 2015 be noted, and that the Committee had been reassured that the problems identified were being addressed.

70. SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) - IMPLEMENTATION BOARD

The Committee received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 41 to 50, outlining the key work strands undertaken by Wokingham Borough Council in the delivery of the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms and the progress made within each.

Brain Grady presented the report and highlighted that the information provided demonstrates the progress made in delivery of the reforms which will ensure that all children and young people and their families will benefit from the new legislation within the Children's Act at the earliest opportunity. He pointed out that the key work strands approach has received excellent feedback from the Department for Education on recent inspection visits, and all key deadlines have been met.

RESOLVED: That the report outlining the key work strands undertaken by Wokingham Borough Council in the delivery of the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms and the progress made within each be noted.

71. SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) REFORMS - FRAMEWORK FOR DISABILITY STRATEGY

The Committee received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 51 to 56 detailing the framework for the development of a strategy for the services for children with a disability.

Judith Ramsden explained that this was a refresh of the strategy, the aim of which is to identify and steer service development for children and young people with disabilities. It is part of a family of strategies setting out the way in which the Council will support and children/young people and their families.

In answer to a question about the financial impact, Officers responded that changing the approach towards more local provision should save money as it would reduce the number of children having to be placed in out of Borough settings. A refreshed approach is being worked on, with the ambition of accessing appropriate funding from Health and the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to give a comprehensive package.

RESOLVED: That the report detailing the framework for the development of a strategy for the services for children with a disability be noted.

72. RESPONSE TO MINISTER'S CONSULTATION REGARDING FREE NURSERY PLACES

The Committee received and considered a verbal report from the Chairman on the proposal by the Government to increase the provision of free nursery places. She said that the Government was going to consult on the proposal to increase the number of hours of free nursery provision for 3 and 4 year olds in September 2016, from 15 hours per week for 38 weeks to 30 hours per week.

The issue of concern that has come to light is that some of the independent and private providers are currently struggling to meet their costs in providing the 15 free hours, and can only create the extra income needed to survive by charging those people who currently buy additional hours of provision. If the free hours were to increase there would be little or no requirement for parents to buy extra hours, so the income for the settings would not cover their costs. Providers would have to increase their charges for any

additional hours bought. It has been suggested that Local Authorities could help settings in financial difficulties by offering discounted business rates. Wokingham is a high cost area, and is in competition for staff with adjoining areas which are able to pay more.

Gill Walker, Service Manager Standards in Learning, confirmed that the funding is at a national rate which is passed on to the providers via the Local Authority for the sessions they provide. The Council tries to give as much 'upfront' funding as it can, however the level of funding per place will not rise. Officers had carried out a sufficiency audit for the provision of the free 15 hours, and are now renewing the audit to gather information on the provision for 30 hours; to understand the current capacity and the potential level of need. Members are asked to encourage the providers to give the information requested so that a full picture can be obtained.

If the Early Years settings are not able or willing to meet the demand for the free 30 hours, there would be an impact on the Local Authority, as the responsibility to meet the demand sits with them. There is little prospect of additional funding coming from either the central Children's Services budget or the Dedicated Schools Grant funded budgets.

The Chairman suggested that the Committee should send a response to the consultation highlighting the specific issues in Wokingham as follows:

RESOLVED: that response to the Government's consultation on increasing the provision of free nursery places for 3 and 4 year olds from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week for 38 weeks each year be sent in the following terms:

'The costs of running a nursery/early years setting is higher in Wokingham Borough than on other areas of the country, because of the rising costs of rent. The allocated funding does not cover their basic costs, so some settings are facing the dilemma of having to increase the charge to those families who currently buy additional hours; some of whom only have one working parent, or who might not be able to afford increased costs.

To allocate more from the DSG would take funding away from all other schools in the Borough. Wokingham receives the lowest per pupil funding in the country.

The Local Authority is not in a position to top up funding for nursery/early years places from central budgets, as it is one of the lowest funded Unitary Authorities in the country.'

73. SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE - OFSTED REPORTS

The Committee received and considered summaries of recent Ofsted inspection reports in respect of the following schools, set out on Agenda pages 57 to 72:

- Lambs Lane Primary School – overall rating 3 'requires improvement', previous rating 3 'requires improvement'
- Shinfield Infant and Nursery School – overall rating 2 'good', previous rating 2 'good'
- Loddon Primary School – subject survey – Mathematics overall effectiveness 'good'
- Maiden Erlegh School – overall rating 2 'good', previous rating 1 'outstanding'
- Bearwood Primary School – outcome of the first monitoring inspection following judgement in December 2014 that the school required improvement. Effective action is being taken to tackle the areas requiring improvement; three further actions required
- Lambs Lane Primary School – outcome of the first monitoring inspection following judgement in February 2015 that the school required improvement. Effective action is being taken to tackle the areas requiring improvement; one further action required.

It was noted that the reports had made good comments about the support that the Local Authority was giving to the schools that required improvement. In relation to Lambs Lane, Officers reported that recent change to the Governing Body had meant the school was now in a position to deliver challenge and support. It was disappointing that Maiden Erlegh had changed from 'outstanding' to 'good'.

In response to a question, Officers confirmed that there were no schools in the Borough who were in the position of being forced to become an academy because of poor performance.

RESOLVED: That the recently published Ofsted reports be noted.

74. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Committee received and considered a report, giving details of the Children's Services performance indicators in the Balanced Score Card, relating to the following headings: Keeping Children Safe; Narrowing the Gap; and Opportunities for All, as set out on Agenda pages 73 to 80.

The Committee were pleased to note that Indicator 5 – *Safeguarding - % of children subject to a child Protection Plan for the second, or subsequent time* was now green, and that all other indicators were green.

RESOLVED: That the report giving details of the Children's Services performance indicators in the Balanced Score Card be noted.

75. COMMITTEE'S FORWARD PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered its current work programme, set out on Agenda pages 81 to 88, and agreed the following amendments:

- October – add an update report on the Early Help Programme, moved from September
- October – add an update report on the School Improvement and Delivery Model
- December – add an update report on the implementation of the Primary Place Strategy
- December – add an update report on the MASH
- February – add an update report on the outcome of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy

(Subsequently an update on the development of the Draft Primary School Places Strategy was added to the September meeting, as the Strategy would now be going to the October Executive Committee meeting)

76. DELIVERING EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN - CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received and considered the Children's Social Care Annual Review, which had been included as an urgent item and circulated separately.

Felicity Budgen presented the report, which summarised some of the successes and challenges within Children's Social Care. There have been improvements and the evidence base suggests that the welfare of vulnerable children is effectively safeguarded.

Several things are underpinning the improvements:

- The recruitment of permanent staff;
- Training given to all staff
- The development of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- The new ways of working within the Positive Choice Framework.

Areas requiring further action and development include: the need to look at the quality of consistency of approach; and robust record keeping. The permanency of managers and the new tools given to social workers to do their jobs will assist in embedding the improvements.

In response to a question, Section 20 was explained, as follows:

Section 20 is in relation to children who become 'looked after children' voluntarily with their parents' consent, not via a court order. There is new guidance that children should not be left in these voluntary arrangements, long term. Decisions about the permanency of their care should be made at an early opportunity to give legal certainty to their future. Within the Borough, 12 months ago there were 44 such children. However no concerns had been raised when this situation was last checked.

It was noted that within the report, there had been more compliments than complaints. The teams should be congratulated for the improvements made.

RESOLVED: That the Children's Social Care Annual Review 2014/15 be noted, and that the areas for development identified within the report be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Quality Assurance Manager to inform the next Annual Review report which will be presented to the July meeting of the Committee in 2016.

Agenda Item 24.

TITLE:	Children's Partnership Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY:	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 September 2015
WARD:	None Specific
DIRECTOR:	Judith Ramsden, Director of Children's Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To ensure that the Partnership is effective in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

RECOMMENDATION

That Overview and Scrutiny note the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

As the report outlines that progress has been made against all the identified priorities. In particular:

On Priority 1:

- an Early Help Hub has been established as a multi-agency forum to deliver effective response for children and families .
- The Children with Disability Strategy has been drafted and is currently being developed in conjunction with partners.

On Priority 1a:

- An Early Help Strategy was agreed and implemented and is subject to further development in a "phase 2", to improve school readiness.
- A wide range of stakeholders, including health, Wokingham BC teams, parents and other family members have been involved in the ongoing development of the strategy and the resulting Practice Framework.

On Priority 1b:

- The joint Wokingham CCG and Wokingham BC Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy was presented to the Board on 11th June 2015. This included a detailed action plan for the coming year. Implementation of the strategy is well underway

On Priority 2:

- A revised School Improvement Strategy has been implemented.
- A Head's steering group has been established.
- The primary and secondary place provision strategies are in the process of being implemented, including a new secondary school in September 2016 and the Primary strategy is being refreshed.

On Priority 3:

- The local offer is on track.
- Transfers to Education Health and Care plans are proceeding in an orderly fashion.
- A joint Strategy is being developed with the CCG to commission services

Background

The Children's Partnership comprises partner agencies who work together to promote the safeguarding and wellbeing of children, young people and their families in the Borough. Its overarching strategy, The Children and Young People's Plan sets the direction and priorities for services for children and young people between 2014 and 2016. Whilst the Children and Young People's Plan is no longer a statutory requirement, Wokingham and its partners have found it to be a useful tool to capture the activities of the partners and promote cohesiveness in planning for children and young people.

Five key priorities were set in the Plan:

Priority 1 - Refresh and renew our Early Help approach, building on what works well, empowering professionals to always keep child centred and designing service to enable excellent practice

Priority 1a - As part of a renewed focus on Early Help, develop an integrated 0-5 offer across the Local Authority, health and early years sector

Priority 1b - As part of a renewed focus on Early Help, review emotional health and wellbeing services including primary CAMHS to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people.

Priority 2 - Ensure more Wokingham children have access to the best education and focus on delivering improvements for those most at risk of poor outcomes

Priority 3 - Implement changes required to deliver on the Children and Families Act 2014 and go further to bring the child and family into the centre of assessment, planning and support processes.

Analysis of Issues

Progress has been made in all areas of the Plan (see Appendix 1). The Partnership has progressed the development of an Early Help Hub and multi-agency practitioners are jointly trained in the use of the Practice Framework which offers practical tools for working with children and families and undertaking assessments. These tools give practitioners a way of working with families to resolve issues and prevent them escalating but at the same time helps them to recognise when statutory intervention is required in order to keep children safe. These tools include Signs of Safety, Restorative Practice, Family Star Outcomes.

The Multi Agency Early Help Hub assesses and prioritises cases and has input from partners across the Police, Health (including Health Visitors and CAMHS), Social Care and the Voluntary Sector.

Audit and analysis of the cases that have used the tools will help the Partnership to identify the next steps and any improvements required for the Hub.

Our partners at the CCG have reported that a good range of training opportunities are available to their staff. Many GP practices have also been offered and have taken up training in the use of Signs of Safety and in understanding Child Sexual Exploitation. There is evidence of the impact of the training offered however the CCG will be developing a database of training to monitor the effectiveness and to address any emerging issues. In particular the CCG wishes to evidence the voice of the child in their training.

An Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 11th June 2015 which sets out how integrated services commissioned and delivered by Wokingham Borough Council and Wokingham CCG will support the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people in Wokingham by providing a holistic offer from prevention through to specialist intensive therapies.

The Wokingham Primary and Secondary Strategies are being implemented. A new secondary school is on track to open in September 2016. Three new primary schools were built in 2013 and the Evendons Free Primary school has also opened. New schools are in development as part of the borough's SDL developments. The School Improvement strategy undergoing 2nd review. The percentage of good/better schools improved (83-86%), with significant improvements in Early Years and Primary School results. The preliminary data in relation to the gaps in attainment is mixed with elements of improvement in 2015.

A Head-teacher steering group has been established to strengthen strategic focus to learning. These groups meet termly throughout the year. Schools have benefited from better and more timely distribution of data packs to support them in the delivery of their self-evaluations. School improvement officers reported that these self-evaluations were focused and succinct and the appropriate support was put in place.

From September 2014, The Children and Families Act 2014 required all local authorities to publish in one place information about the services they expect to be available in their area for children and young people 0 - 25 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This was published however technical issues initially prevented it from being as useful as it should have been. These issues have now been resolved and the offer is accessible on the Wokingham Information Network.

A Joint Children with Disabilities Strategy is in development and is currently subject to consultation with partners, in particular with Wokingham CCG and will promote integration of service delivery for children with disabilities. We are progressing with the implementation of Education Health and Care assessments and plans, personal budgets and new transition arrangements.

We are confident that we have made good progress so far with the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan and that the Partnership is now moving into a new phase of consolidating and strengthening its approach to joint delivery and integration. Partnership Recruitment and Retention activities are underway as part of the Workforce Development Strategy to help us deliver our intentions in relation to Early Help and across the wider children's workforce. The next steps are to align and accelerate the development of a joint workforce induction programme and to ensure sustainability of our approach to joint working.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The financial implications of each component of the plan will be dealt with decision by decision, rather than through the further development of the plan.

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

List of Background Papers

- Wokingham Children and Young People's Plan 2014 – 2016

Contact Brian Grady, Head of Strategic Commissioning	Service Children's Strategic Commissioning
Telephone No 0118 974 6247	Email brian.grady@wokingham.gov.uk
Date	Version No.

Children and Young People's Partnership update on priorities 2014-16

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
<p>Priority 1 - Refresh and renew our Early Help approach, building on what works well, empowering professionals to always keep child centred and designing service to enable excellent practice.</p>	<p><i>Children in need often have poorer outcomes than their peers. (JSNA).</i></p> <p><i>Wokingham has proportionally fewer children in need than seen elsewhere and the numbers are relatively small. This is also true for looked after children and children subject to a child protection plan. (JSNA).</i></p> <p><i>Children eligible for free school meals are more likely to start school at a disadvantage and the gap in performance does not decrease as the children progress through school (WBC).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of multi-agency front door team -Bringing together a range of early intervention activity (September 2014). • Joint strategy agreed for children with disability including options promote integration for service delivery (December 2014) • Implementation of the WSCB Levels of Need for services for children in Wokingham (Apr 2014). 	<p>The Early Help Hub has been established in Wokingham as part of the Multi-Agency Early Help offer. The Early Help Hub is a multi-agency forum that meets on a weekly basis to support the allocation of Early Help referrals based on family consent and agency support. The Early Help Hub monitors all families that are signposted to level 2 support.</p> <p>The Wokingham Children with Disability Strategy has been drafted and is currently in subject to consultation (and further development) with partner agencies and in particular the Wokingham CCG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to early years forum in March 2015 (50+ attended) • Presentation to child-minders forum (30+ attended) • Audit undertaken by Ingson in March 2015 assessed how Levels of Need were used and appropriateness – confirmed they were correct level and showed impact on outcomes for children • Revised July 2015 and open to consultation for WSCB members until September 2015

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring impact of the Levels of need (Sep) • Integrated workforce strategy to deliver a skilled and motivated workforce across organisations (Apr 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to managers leading change (children’s social care) in August 2015 <p>In relation to the current Practice Framework MTM (England Innovations Programme) completed a survey in Wokingham based on how motivated staff feel across Children’s Services, the survey shows that staff feel that they have a better understanding of harm/risk with families, more opportunity to have their say, they more involved in decision making and feel that they have clearer goals to work towards. The survey also shows that Wokingham are below the National average in relation to their workforce feeling “stressed” and that they feel that management provide good support for difficult or stressful situations, along with feeling positive about supervision. These feelings are also reflected in our Q1 evaluation whereby our retention statistics have reduced to 9.9% with recruiting more permanent staff to continue to support the turnover statistics.</p>

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
<p>Priority 1a - As part of a renewed focus on Early Help, develop an integrated 0-5 offer across the Local Authority, health and early year's sector</p>	<p><i>Despite overall good results in early years there are some disadvantaged children who do not achieve a "good standard of achievement", which is designed to measure school readiness. (WBC).</i></p> <p><i>Children eligible for free school meals are more likely to start school at a disadvantage and the gap in performance does not decrease as the children progress through school (WBC).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Early intervention Strategy for 0-5's will lead to more joined up services for early years youngsters and their families, help more children be ready for school and narrow the gap in outcomes experienced by those at risk of being left behind April 2016 • Multi agency and stakeholder consultation on 0-5 design (Jun-Sep) • Strategy agreed including resource shifts (Dec) 	<p>Our Early Help Strategy is being implemented with a renewed commitment and focus on early help for families by developing and embedding effective working and service practice for the benefit of families. An action plan has been developed for Phase Two which aims to tackle and redress the underlying root causes of disparity in school readiness amongst some of our young children.</p> <p>Wide stakeholder events were held with key personnel including those from the Local Authority, Wokingham Borough Council Public Health, Public Health services for Berkshire, Children's Services, Children's Centres, provider services (including Health Visitors, Midwives, Family Nurse Practitioners), Clinical Commissioning Group, voluntary sector, Education, etc.</p> <p>A number of consultation events were also held with parents (mothers and fathers), grandparents, foster carers, etc., at a number of venues within Wokingham. The output from these events fed into the local service specification and service build.</p>

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
<p>Priority 1b - As part of a renewed focus on Early Help, review emotional health and wellbeing services including primary CAMHS to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people.</p>	<p><i>Continued and increasing high usage of both Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and wider counselling and emotional health and wellbeing support services (JSNA).</i></p> <p><i>Partnership reviews Identify the need for all tiers of emotional health and wellbeing provision to work together as a better system, so that children and young people are identified early and access any support they need quickly at the lowest and least restrictive tier possible. (JSNA).</i></p> <p><i>Wokingham Borough scored significantly worse than the national average for the previous National Indicator relating to the emotional health of children (JSNA).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree an integrated Wokingham CCG and Wokingham Borough Council emotional health and wellbeing strategy setting out how children and young people are able to access the right support at the right time (Sep); • Improve specialist CAMHS access and outcomes through local partnership working and monitoring and action (next measure Sep); • Re-commission Tier 1 and 2 Emotional Health and wellbeing services (Apr 2016); • Continue to improve monitoring of impact, building on the outcome monitoring models developed by specialist CAMHS (next measure Sep). 	<p>The joint Wokingham CCG and BC Emotional health and Wellbeing Strategy was presented to Board on 11th June 2015.</p> <p>Work is in progress to identify how best to implement the re-commissioning of Tier 1 and 2 services. This includes through a developing partnership with other Berkshire authorities</p> <p>The next course of Nurture Assistant training advertised to schools to start September 2015. Pan-Berks group set up to increase this type of training to early years.</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Ensure more Wokingham children have access to the best education</p>	<p><i>All Secondary Schools in the Borough good or outstanding (WBC).</i></p> <p><i>Some performance issues at primary and the attainment gap at KS2 and KS4 (GCSEs) between children eligible for free school meals and those who are not Children in need often have</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise School Improvement strategy to ensure appropriate actions to address priorities identified in recent self-evaluation. A dual focus on inequalities where gaps between the achievement of the majority and vulnerable pupil 	<p>Actions completed. Preliminary “gaps” data is overall better with mixed elements for 2015. Improved in priority areas eg Early Years, more able primary pupils. School Improvement strategy undergoing 2nd review % good/better schools improved 83-86%,</p>

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
<p>and focus on delivering improvements for those most at risk of poor outcomes</p>	<p><i>poorer outcomes than their peers. (WBC).</i></p> <p><i>There is a higher proportion of children with special educational needs among the Wokingham children in need population. Whilst there are relatively fewer children eligible for free school meals in Wokingham than seen nationally, the percentage of these children with statements of special educational need is higher than seen elsewhere (JSNA).</i></p>	<p>groups are too wide and to increase the proportion of good and outstanding schools (December 2014).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Primary and Secondary place strategies, delivering five new Primary Schools and a new Secondary School by 2016 • Task-and-finish Headteacher group to sign off policy documentation (July 2014) • Heads' steering group established to ensure sustainable strategic focus (September 2014) • Revised data packs circulated to schools to aid their self-evaluations (September 2014) • Support for Headteacher groups put in place (December 2014) • Improved self evaluations evidenced (March 2015) 	<p>with significant improvements in Early Years & primary school results</p> <p>The Wokingham Primary and Secondary Strategies are being implemented. A new secondary school is on track to open in September 2016. Three new primary school were built in 2013 and the Evendons Free Primary school has also opened. New schools are in development as part of the borough's SDL developments.</p> <p>Task completed and documentation in place</p> <p>Steering Group established and met termly through the year</p> <p>Data packs were expanded and issued earlier to be more effective in 2014. Reviewed again for 2015</p> <p>Task completed/Support in place</p> <p>School Improvement Officers report self-evaluations well focussed and succinct</p>

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
<p>Priority 3 - Implement changes required to deliver on the Children and Families Act 2014 and go further to bring the child and family into the centre of assessment, planning and support processes.</p>	<p><i>Section 26 of the Children and Families Act 2014 sets out statutory requirements for local authorities and clinical commissioning groups and other NHS bodies with a duty for the provision of services and facilities under the National Health Service Act 2006 for children and young people to make joint “arrangements about the education, health and care provision to be secured for children and young people with special educational needs for whom it is responsible and for those with disabilities”.</i></p> <p><i>Support for children in transition is particularly important for Wokingham – we have low numbers of children transitioning from children’s to adults services and recent service reviews suggest areas for improvement (JSNA)</i></p> <p>.</p> <p><i>There is a higher proportion of children with special educational needs among the Wokingham children in need population. Whilst there are relatively fewer children eligible for free school meals in Wokingham than seen nationally, the percentage of these children with statements of special educational need is higher than seen elsewhere (JSNA).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Offer published online setting out Education, Social care and Health services available for children and families (September 2014) • Education and social care personal budgets tested with EHCP cohort (July 2014) • Arrangements for allocation of personal budgets across implemented (Sep 2014) • Education, Health and Care Assessments tested on cohort (July 2014) 	<p>Local Offer on track. Some system issues which have been a national concern now resolved. Additional providers added through Alternative Provision Task and Finish group. First update of information underway. First publication of feedback due 31st August 2015. Ongoing challenges (Staffing and services updating information) and the need for strategic management going forward as the Local Offer is the shop window of council, health and other services.</p> <p>A test programme of Independent Budgets is in development.</p> <p>New requests for assessment – where supported – are now being delivered through EHC Plans.</p> <p>EHCP program of transfers underway. Very positive feedback form schools and families regarding the quality of the process. Each session taking longer than expected as very thorough and still a</p>

Priority	Evidence for Priority	Key actions in our first year	Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Health and Care Plans implemented (Sep 2014) • Transfer arrangements in place (Sep 2014) • Transfer action plan agreed (Sep) • Changes to transition services (April 2015) • Implementation of multi-agency front door team -Bringing together a range of early intervention activity (Sep 2014). • Joint strategy agreed for children with disability including options promote integration for service delivery (Dec 2015) 	<p>learning process for all involved. National guidance changed in July 2015 to lengthen the transition period.</p> <p>All Sencos trained on transfer review process, offered to health staff.</p> <p>Additional resources (1/2 FTE staff post) secured to support transition.</p> <p>Early Help Hub launched (see above)</p> <p>The strategy is in draft and is subject to consultation with health partners.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 26.

TITLE	Annual Review of the Corporate Parenting Board
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 2 September 2015
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Judith Ramsden, Director of Children's Services

SUMMARY

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to being an outstanding corporate parent, and has a legal responsibility to children in care and those leaving our care. The Annual Corporate Parenting Board provides assurance that we are making progress towards that goal.

The Annual Corporate Record report sets out how Wokingham Borough Council has worked to fulfil its responsibilities over the last year using both qualitative and quantitative data and the feedback of the children and young people in our care and those who are currently leaving care.

The report provides the rationale for the Corporate Parenting Boards strategy in 2015/16.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2014/15 as part of our assurance to Corporate Parenting Board of delivery and impact for Children in Care

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the annual review of the Corporate Parenting Board report be confirmed and noted.

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report and Impact Statement 2012 – 2015

1. Introduction

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to being an outstanding corporate parent, and has a legal responsibility to children in care and those leaving our care. As Corporate Parents we must replicate the care and support provided by a 'good enough parent'. We do not underestimate the challenges this poses but we know that for our children in care and care leavers, their experiences in early childhood and through their teenage years are critical in shaping their future happiness and setting the foundations for what they can achieve throughout their adult lives. Good parenting is vital, which is why the role of Corporate Parent is one of the central responsibilities of the Council.

In order to demonstrate our commitment to being good corporate parents the Council has made a *Pledge* to the children and young people in its care, adopted a **Care Leavers Charter**, and adopted a **Foster Carer's Charter**.

This report sets out how Wokingham Borough Council has worked to fulfil its responsibilities over the last year using both qualitative and quantitative data and the feedback of the children and young people in our care and those who are currently leaving care.

The report provides the rationale for the Corporate Parenting Boards strategy in 2015/16.

2. Key information

Corporate Parenting is the term used to refer to the responsibility of the Council to provide the best possible care and protection for children and young people who are "looked after". At the core of this responsibility is the moral duty to provide the kind of support that any good parents would provide their own children.

The Legal Framework: Legislation and statutory and non-statutory guidance covering the responsibilities of local authorities and their partners for children in care is extensive. The legal framework covers all aspects of a child's journey through care, including health, education and ensuring the child's voice is heard in the care process. The framework also includes regulations and guidance relevant to children's homes and fostering services providers. The below pictorial representation of this framework rightly places the looked after child at the centre:



3. Our strategic priorities 2014 - 2015

- i. To ensure the strength and effectiveness of the role of the Corporate Parenting Board thus its impact on the Corporate Parenting function of the Council as a whole
- ii. To strengthen the voice of children in care and care leavers in planning, reviewing and decision making
- iii. To consolidate progress and continue to improve the timeliness of permanency for children in care across the range of permanent options
- iv. To improve provision for care leavers in Wokingham
- v. To improve educational outcomes for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham
- vi. To improve health provision for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham

4. Partnerships

As a good corporate parent, we will use our leadership role in statutory boards to ensure that outcomes for children in care and care leavers are improved year on year. The key to ensuring that children in care receive the best possible service is to

work in partnership with other agencies from the moment children first receive services from us. The below are some of the boards/partnerships that contribute to the quality of service that children in care and care leavers receive.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 established Health and Wellbeing Boards as a forum where the local leaders from the health and social care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities.

Wokingham's Health and Wellbeing Board took on its statutory function from April 2013. The Health and Wellbeing board has a Children's and Young Peoples Partnership sub group.

The Health and Wellbeing Board provides oversight and accountability for the "Berkshire Health Strategy for Children in care and Young People 2012 – 2015", which sets out the action plan and priorities for improving the health outcomes of children in care and care leavers.

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report goes to Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board. The safeguarding board has a protocol in place with the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure information is shared and all partner agencies appraised of developments.

Wokingham Safeguarding Children's Board

The Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board works to safeguard children and young people and protect those who are at risk. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) were established by the government to ensure that organisations work together to protect children and are regulated by Ofsted. The LSCB scrutinises the safeguarding of children in care, and will hold the CPB to account in this regard. The Corporate Parenting Board will report to the LSCB annually for multi-agency support and challenge. The objectives of the Board as set in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 are;

- To coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes

The functions of the Board as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 are;

- To develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including policies and procedures in relation to:

- The action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
- Training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
- Recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;
- Investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
- Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;
- Cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners;
- To communicate to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;
- To participate in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority;
- To undertake reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

Community Safety Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership is made up of the key organisations responsible for keeping the borough safe. The partnership includes: Thames Valley Police, the Borough Council, Thames Valley Probation, Berkshire West Primary Care Trust, Thames Valley Police Authority and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Priorities include hidden crimes and their impact on vulnerable people and their families, which includes work on domestic abuse and hate crime.

Local Family Justice Board

The Family Justice Board was established in March 2012 in response to the Family Justice Review. The Board is supported by a network of 45 Local Family Justice Boards. The aim of Local Family Justice Boards is to achieve significant improvement in the performance of the family justice system in local areas.

This is specifically in relation to implementing the 26 week timescale for completing care proceedings for children. The underpinning principle of this timescale is to achieve a plan for permanency for the child in order to meet their immediate and long term needs.

5. Being accountable to children in care

In 2010, following consultation with the Children in Care Council, Wokingham Borough Council made a pledge to children in care. The Children in Care Council continue to support the validity of the pledge and review the services delivery by asking children in care whether the pledge has been delivered.

In June 2013 the children in care council proposed to the Corporate Parenting Board that a separate and specific pledge to care leavers should be made. The Wokingham **Care Leavers' Charter** was formally adopted in November 2014. A draft version went to the Corporate Parenting Board in 2013 and since that date the service began working to it.

The **Foster Carer Charter** was first developed in April 2012. It was reviewed in April 2014 and sent to foster carers in December 2014.

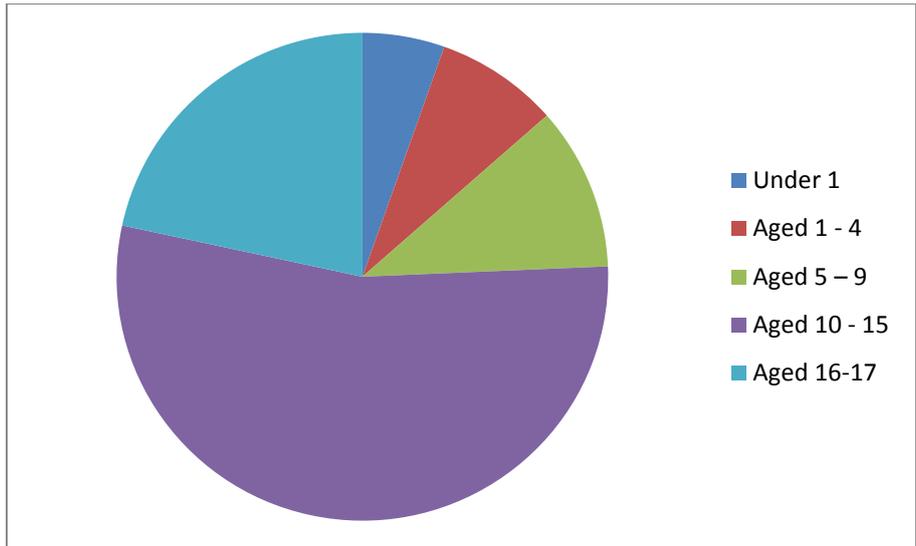
6. Our children in care

Headline data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are the corporate parent to 74 children in our care and 38 care leavers as at March 15 • We continue to care for significantly fewer children per 10,000 than our statistical neighbours , the SE region or England - there is no evidence that this is the 'wrong rate for Wokingham' • We have significantly more boys in our care in the age groups 10-15 and 16-17 • Increase of children subject to care orders in 2013 (2012 was 8) has been maintained • Children subject to section 20/voluntary care arrangements have remained steady over 3 to 4 years • Adoption rates are low

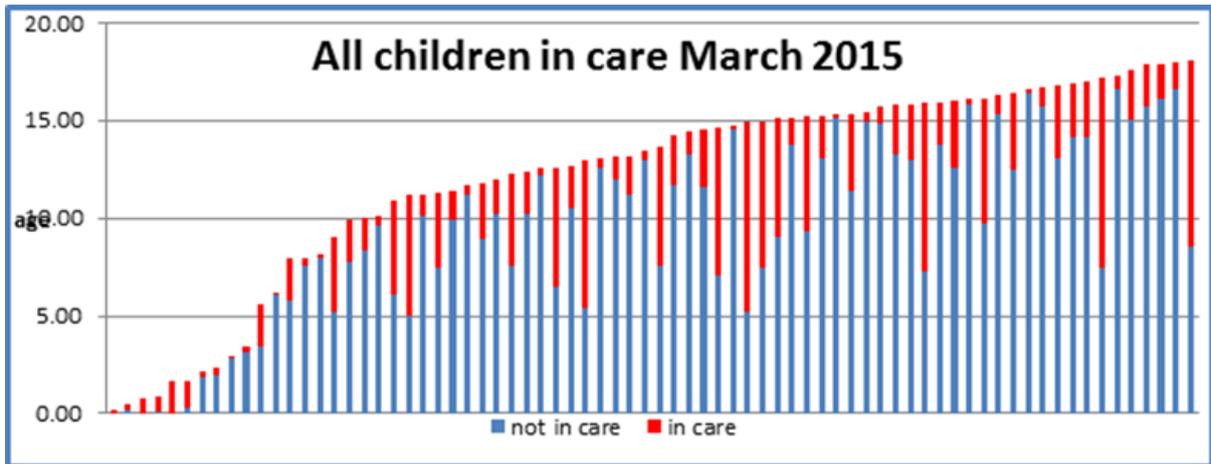
The number of children in care in Wokingham has remained relatively stable for the past few years with the highest number being 86 as at March 2013, and the lowest being 72 as at March 2012. As at March 2015 we have 74 children in our care and 38 care leavers aged under 21.

Children in care: Rate per 10,000 Children				
Area	2011	2012	2013	2014
Wokingham	21.0	20.0	24.0	20.0
SE Region	46.0	47.0	47.0	48.0
Statistical neighbours	37.9	37.8	37.9	39.4
England	58.0	59.0	60.0	60.0

Age Profile of children in care in Wokingham (March 2015)



Wokingham has noticeably reduced the number of younger children in care recently, but the number of children aged over 10 are rising, with children aged 10-15 now comprising over half our children in care.



The above graph shows the time children have spent in care, matched to their age as at March 2015 – the colour change shows when they came into care.

Time in care so far	Number of children as at 31 March 2014	Number of children as at February 2015
Under 1 year	19	24
1-2	24	12
2-3	8	16
3-4	6	4
4-5	3	2
5-6	5	2
6+	10	14
	75	74

The above table show that our children are changing the profile of how long they are staying in care. Although Wokingham has fewer children in care for between 1 and 2 years, we now have more in care for 2 to 3 years.

Ethnicity profile of children in care					
	<u>March 2012</u>	<u>March 2013</u>	<u>March 2014</u>	<u>February 2015</u>	<u>February %</u>
<u>White</u>	63	69	63	65	87.8%
<u>Mixed</u>	6	8	6	4	5.4%
<u>Asian or Asian British</u>	1	5	4	3	4.1%
<u>Black or Black British</u>	0	1	0	0	0.0%
<u>Other ethnic groups</u>	2	3	2	2	2.7%
<u>Total</u>	72	86	75	74	100%

Gender profile of children in care								
	<u>March 2012</u>		<u>March 2013</u>		<u>March 2014</u>		<u>February 2015</u>	
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
<u>Under 1</u>	2	0	1	3	0	2	1	3
<u>Aged 1 - 4</u>	8	4	9	4	10	3	3	3
<u>Aged 5 – 9</u>	7	6	6	9	3	3	3	5
<u>Aged 10 - 15</u>	18	8	22	11	23	15	24	16
<u>Aged 16-17</u>	10	9	13	8	12	4	14	2
<u>Aged 18+</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Total</u>	45	27	51	35	48	27	45	29
	72		86		75		74	

National data shows a mix of around 55% boys and 45% girls, yet Wokingham's data continues to have boys slightly over-represented in the mix of children currently in care (61% boys and 39% girls). There may be a suggestion that boys in their mid-teens are over-represented.

The Legal Status of our children in care				
	<u>March 2012</u>	<u>March 2013</u>	<u>March 2014</u>	<u>February 2015</u>
<u>Care order – interim</u>	17	18	13	6
<u>Care order – full</u>	30	38	36	38
<u>Vol agreement under s20</u>	22	29	21	28
<u>Freed for adoption</u>	0	0	0	0
<u>Placement order</u>	3	1	5	2
<u>On remand, detained etc</u>	0	0	0	0
<u>Emergency order or police protection</u>	0	0	0	0
<u>Total</u>	72	86	75	74

7. Delivery against Corporate Parenting priorities

(i) To ensure the strength and effectiveness of the role of the Corporate Parenting Board and thus its impact on the Corporate Parenting function of the Council as a whole

As identified below, the Corporate Parenting Board have regularly reviewed a number of items in order to monitor progress and improvement. The below table captures the information and inputs received, which support the Board to fulfil its duties;

CPB Date	Inputs and information received
June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering update, recruitment and end of year report • Independent Reviewing Officer Service annual report for 13/14 • Child Sexual Exploitation and children missing from care report • Presentation regarding Child and Adolescent Mental Health services • Corporate Parenting Board strategy and annual report
September 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wokingham adoption agency service update. Including future development plans • Evaluation of the education of children in care for the academic year 13/14 • Examination of results for children in care for the academic year 13/14 • Refresh of strategy and education action plan • Presentation about the 'ask me about fostering' campaign • Service Quality Improvement Plan for children in care and children on the edge of care • Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board annual report 13/14
November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion protocol and guidance, pupil progress for 13/14, children in care education team action plan for 14/15 • Presentation about the consultation and engagement of children strategy • Children in care pledge update • Presentation about the annual review and update of the Children in Care Council • Adoption scorecard information including timescale compliance update • Progress update of the permanency project for children in care

January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 monthly update presentation regarding quality assurance of service for children in care • Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust presentation about health update • Care placement and education placement stability presentation • School attendance and exclusions presentation about themes and emerging issues • Update on pupil performance at key stage 2 and 3 • Update on laptop/electronic social media communications provision for all children in care/care leavers aged 16 years and over
March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School attendance and exclusions themes and emerging issues presentation • Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust presentation about health update • Care Leader Pledge review • Young people's housing strategy • Recruitment and Retention strategy • Created the virtual School report

(ii) To strengthen the voice of children in care and care leavers in planning, reviewing and decision making

Wokingham Council is fully committed to putting the experience and feedback of our children in care and care leavers at the heart of our system in order to inform service improvements and strategic priorities, and to ensure a meaningful connectivity and accountability to our children. Information regarding children missing from care is included in the missing children annual update to the LSCB found in appendix 1.

What has gone well in 2014/15?

- The Children in Care Council tell us that we have delivered on the pledges we made in the **CIC Pledge** and the **Care Leavers Charter**
- Adoption of care leavers pledge which was reviewed at the March 2015 Corporate Parenting Board
- An interactive session with children in care and care leavers with officers and members in attendance was facilitated as an open day on 29th October 2014 hosted by the Children in Care Council.
- Listening events between senior officers within the Social work service and the Children in Care Council continued to underpin service and policy changes and developments and proved useful in testing the implementation and take up of previous service changes
- A commissioned Independent Visitor (IV) Scheme started in October 2014; there are 8 IV's due to be approved and matched to specific children in care.

- Commissioning of National Youth Support Agency (NYASS) to provide and support any children in care or care leavers who go missing , upon their return to ensure timely and independent assessment of the underlying reasons
- Work to strengthen the strategic and operational approach regarding the work to identify and safeguard children in care who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Strengthened the CSE framework and training
- Work to strengthen the targeted youth support service to meet the holistic needs of children in care and care leavers
- The restorative approach adopted within the children's rights service and the social work service has led to early and respectful resolution of issues that children in care have raised about the quality of their care, the service they receive or issues in general
- Strengthened Targeted Youth Services offer
- Positively discrimination within the new young commissioner (apprentice) programme to ensure 1 of the 3 posts gate kept for a suitably qualified care leaver
- There is a 'you said, we did' response to the May 2014 Children in Care Council consultation contain in appendix 2
- 92.6% of children in care attended or participated in their own review.
- 40 young people accessed 200 pieces of advocacy support
- The Children in Care Council tell us that we have delivered on the pledges we made in the **CIC Pledge** and the **Care Leavers Charter**
- Approx. 93% of statutory visits were on time. Some may not have been on time due to the Easter break and may show as not on time due to delay in recording visits.

Action taken in the year

- The annual survey of Children in Care Council regarding the pledge was conducted in January and presented to the Corporate Parenting Board on 17th March 2015.
- The annual report of the Children in Care Council was presented to the Corporate Parenting Board in November 2014
- The care leaver pledge was developed and adopted in November 2014.
- The annual survey of children in care and care leavers with a focus on safeguarding has been delivered, the Children's Rights Officer Chris Ames carried out consultations in January 2015.
- In January 2015 the Corporate Parenting Board heard that members of the Children in Care Council had taken part in interviews.

What do children in care tell us?

Overall feedback from children in care is positive and tells the Corporate Parenting Board that the promises the Council made to children in care are being delivered on. Issues continued to be raised by the Children in Care Council about the lack of

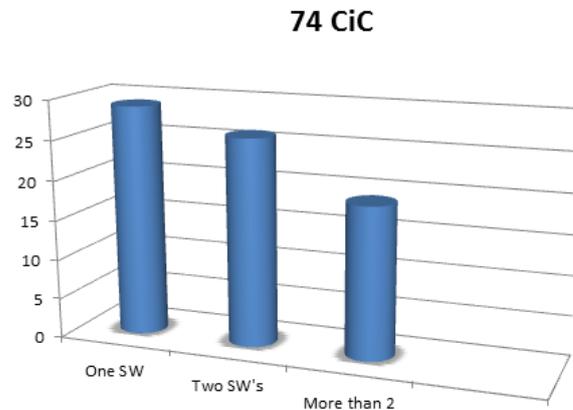
continuity of Social Worker. Creating and sustaining a skilled and stable workforce has been a key priority of 2014/15 within Children’s Services. Please see Appendix 3 for the report on the impact of the new strategic approach to recruitment, retention and training of social workers. Some notable points from some of the consultation work that has taken place includes;

<u>Consultation</u>	<u>What children in care and care leavers told us</u>
Children in care and care leaver safeguarding survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 80% of children feel safe where they live • That 47% of children feel fairly safe in town with the remaining cohort feeling very safe or that it varies • Children felt that drugs, alcohol and bullying were the biggest dangers to people their age • 77% of children felt that they either don’t worry about their safety, don’t worry much, or that it varies • 24 out of 30 young people would go to their social worker if they felt unsafe and 27 out of 30 would go to their foster carer • 55% said they never get bullied
Leaving Care Pledge survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of care leavers who took part in the survey felt; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cared for ○ Positive about the Leaving Care Pledge and said it was being fulfilled ○ Their strengths, gifts and talents were valued ○ Majority felt listened to and that their opinions were respected ○ Majority felt prepared for independent living
Children in care Pledge Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall it was found that the pledge is considered a very useful tool in ensuring that children in Wokingham’s care are supported correctly. The survey identified some issues that individual children have experienced which was useful in itself as they could be individually addressed.

What are we worried about?

- The take up of the Independent Visitor scheme is low/the approval process appears to be slow
- The skilled and well established Children’s Rights and Advocacy Worker is due to retire and we would want to ensure continuity of support for the Children in Care Council and individual young people who need her support

- The number of changes of social worker our children in care have experienced over the last year are as follows; 29 of 74 (39%) have had 1 consistent social worker; 26 of the 74 (35%) have had 2; 19 of the 74 (26%) have had more than 2 social workers in the past 12 month
- The Children's Rights and Advocacy worker is about to retire



Areas for development and next steps

- Commission a children's rights and advocacy service which ensures continuity but also adds capacity and resilience
- Establish a new pathway for children in care and care leavers to the IV scheme to overcome the current system barriers
- Invite a member of the Children in Care Council or care leaver to become a member of the Fostering Panel, the internal 'promoting permanence panel', the management committee of the virtual school, and the challenge sessions that will occur in 2015/16
- Ensure each year the Children in Care Council facilitate one of the social work development sessions or have an input into the cross service day
- Ensure the recruitment of social workers is prioritised for children in care and care leavers
- A programme of life story work that is sustainable and meaningful is needed
- That all managers are asked to ensure that their social workers who are leaving have time to say 'good bye'

(iii) To consolidate progress and continue to improve the timeliness of permanency for children in care across the range of permanent options

The Children in Care Strategy 2012-2015 set out a detailed foster care improvement plan based on audited need; this was further strengthened and invested in, in 2013/14 with the expectation that the impact would be delivered in 2014/15.

Fostering Innovation Project

The Fostering Innovation project in Wokingham which ran between November 2013 and July 2014 showed that we made great progress and measurable signs of improvement.

- In the first two months of 2014-15 enquiries increased by 50% and exceeded our target, and after three months we are on target for year to date.
- Increased attendance at Information Events by 40%. This is a critical indicator, as it measures the quality of enquiries – people who are genuinely interested are far more likely to attend an information event.
- There is a new approval process in place designed to reduce the time taken to approve new carers.

There is an average of 14 cases for full-time workers, which includes initial visits and assessment work. Carers currently receive one to one supervision during a monthly home visit.

Feedback

Consultation meetings were held with Foster Carers in January (17% of WBC foster carers attended) and February 2014 (11% of WBC foster carers attended) to follow up on the Foster Carer survey which took place in 2013. The themes and aim was to address the following;

- Foster Carer engagement in recruitment of more foster carers
- Improving the approval process through feedback from foster carers
- Improving support for foster carers
- Developing opportunities for foster carer consultations through events such as foster carer forum, conferences etc.
- What works well and what needs to change?

A foster carer survey is due at the end of May 2015.

The department have received no complaints about foster carers although have addressed fewer than five issues.

What has gone well in 2014/15?

- 3 of our foster carers stopped being foster carers because they permanently committed themselves to our children in their care and became their adoptive parents or special guardians.
- There is a new Chair of the foster panel and all panel members have been offered training in Signs of Safety
- Refreshed/awareness raising amongst staff regarding the missing from care and CSE policy.

- Feedback and support for the service was received in a live event at Chessington for carers, their own children and our children in care.
- The launch of Adopt Berkshire in February jointly commissioned by four local authorities including Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire. The new Shared Service will enable us to maximise the best practice that previously existed within the four authorities and to be in the strongest position to meet the challenges currently impacting on all adoption services. We expect to increase our recruitment of adopters for older children and sibling groups thus enabling an increased number of our Children in care to be placed within the Berkshire area with all the advantages that this brings, including achieving timely placements. We are also committed to expanding our pool of prospective adopters who are able to take children on a Fostering for Adoption basis, thus facilitating early placement being achieved for more young children.
- Adopted refreshed sufficiency strategy
- Implementation of the fostering innovation project continued in 2014
- Investment in and configuration of a new and dedicated Commissioning Service
- A recruitment strategy was established that involves a joint, “ask me about fostering” marketing campaign which is fronted by a short breaks carer and a new fostering page on Facebook. At March 2015 the scheme had 11 carers.
- The Family Based Short Breaks Service will continue to be a part of Bridges Short Breaks Service but will be working even more closely with the Fostering Service over the coming year as there are clear links and a need to have a continuum of service if children are wherever possible to be maintained within family settings
- Bridges Resource Centre graded as Outstanding by Ofsted
- Significant investment in foster carer training courses in 14/15 which has led to improved short and long term placement stability
- The training included Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy: This is a powerful and effective intervention with carers and child together. Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) supports children to make sense of their past and has been developed to help children and young people who have been adopted or are in foster care.
- Therapeutic parenting training for all our foster carers based on Nurturing Attachments, as a 5 day programme with each day addressing key points essential in therapeutic parenting.
- The IRO service continues to improve and offered greater continuity of IRO to our children in care
- An INGSON audit in Sept 2014 identified that most of the cases they audited were in stable placements. Improved placement stability with the % children in care with three or more placements during the year reducing from 14% in 2011/12 to 11% in 13/14.
- An audit of case work in the Here4U Team conducted in march concluded that 10 of 13 children’s care plans were of good standard.

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Wokingham	-	-	14.0	12.0	11.0
Stat Neighbour	12.3	11.0	11.2	10.2	11.3
England	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0

Source: DfE Children in care and adoption performance tables

- The number of children in care placed under 20 miles from home remains in line with that of other South East authorities. Wokingham has 68% of its children placed within 20 miles of home compared to a statistical neighbour average of 67.3%, the SE average of 70% and the national average of 77.1%. The Wokingham figure does include SEN boarders for our figures where the child is in care. As the recording of care status for SEN boarders may vary in other local authorities therefore it is unclear whether this is included in their statistics.

	% of LAC placed within 20 miles of home
South East	70
Bracknell Forest	75
Brighton and Hove	81
Buckinghamshire	58
East Sussex	76
Hampshire	67
Isle Of Wight	85 (<i>max</i>)
Kent	71
Medway Towns	74
Milton Keynes	74
Oxfordshire	58
Portsmouth	83
Reading	65
Slough	56 (<i>min</i>)
Southampton	77
Surrey	63
West Berkshire	58
West Sussex	70
Windsor and Maidenhead	79
Wokingham	68

What are we worried about?

- Despite the increase interest and attendance at fostering events, this has not translated into increased recruitment and approvals. Targets for recruitment for foster carers and supported lodgings carers are not met

- Changes of Social Worker during the child's care pathway remain too high, despite improvements
- Access to mental health provision
- A net loss of 10 carers (to adoption, 3 resigned due to personal family reasons and 4 family and friends placements ended)
- The percentage of children placed outside our LA boundary does give rise for some concerns, with Wokingham only placing 30% of children within its boundary (68% placed within 20 miles of home community) compared to a statistical neighbour average of 54.7% and a national average of 58.1%. However this analysis can place smaller unitary authorities at a disadvantage, as can be seen from the SE Regional data:

	% LAC within LA boundary
South East	61
Bracknell Forest	60
Brighton and Hove	37
Buckinghamshire	46
East Sussex	82 (max)
Hampshire	65
Isle Of Wight	81
Kent	77
Medway Towns	52
Milton Keynes	55
Oxfordshire	67
Portsmouth	40
Reading	28
Slough	24 (min)
Southampton	43
Surrey	55
West Berkshire	50
West Sussex	75
Windsor and Maidenhead	30
Wokingham	30

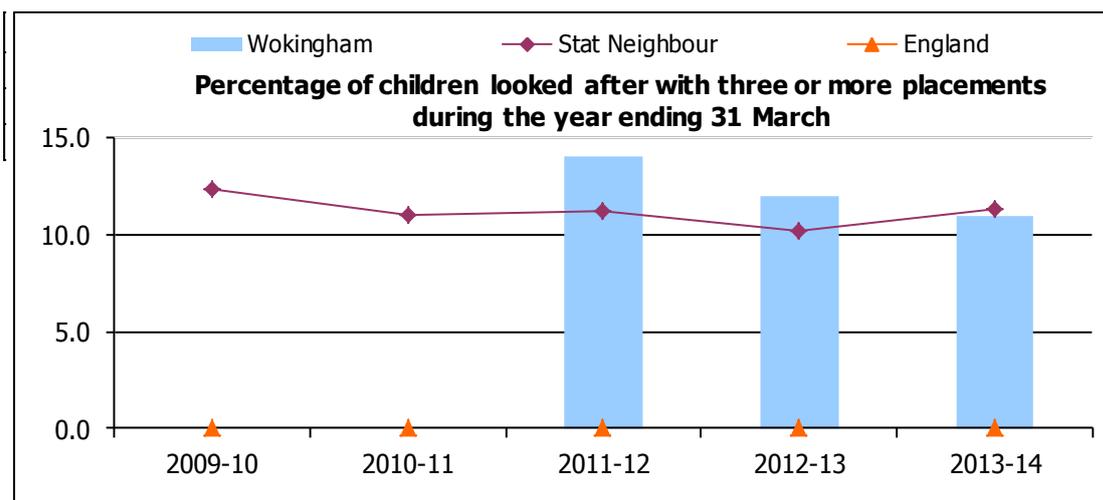
Wokingham's result of 30% is similar to that of Slough (24%), Reading (28%) and Windsor & Maidenhead (30%); perhaps reflecting local difficulty in finding suitable placements in the area. Data on the percentage of children placed more than 20 miles from home and also outside of their LA boundary shows, for our statistical neighbours:

	2012	2013	2014
Hampshire	13.0	14.0	15.0
Windsor and Maidenhead	22.0	13.0	17.0
Hertfordshire	12.0	14.0	17.0
Cheshire East	17.0	16.0	17.0
Bracknell Forest	19.0	17.0	19.0
Surrey	20.0	21.0	22.0
Oxfordshire	18.0	18.0	23.0
Rutland	-	32.0	26.0
Wokingham	28.0	23.0	30.0
Buckinghamshire	25.0	26.0	30.0
West Berkshire	19.0	20.0	32.0
Statistical Neighbours	18.3	19.1	21.8
England	12.0	12.0	13.0

The data around children placed within Berkshire and other authority areas shows as follows;

	Number of children February 2015	%
Placed In Berkshire		
Berkshire	42	56.8%
Placed outside of Berkshire		
Buckinghamshire	1	1.4%
East Sussex	1	1.4%
Hampshire	7	9.5%
Isle of Wight	4	5.4%
Kent	5	6.8%
Middlesex	1	1.4%
Northamptonshire	1	1.4%
Northumberland	1	1.4%
Oxfordshire	1	1.4%
Staffordshire	1	1.4%
Surrey	5	6.8%
Wiltshire	1	1.4%
Worcestershire	1	1.4%
	Total	41.1%
Redacted/Missing	1	1.4%
	74	100%

- The percentage of children looked after who have had three or more placements during the year ending 31st March 2014 has slightly improved although has remained relatively consistent.



Next steps

- Review the best way to ensure sufficiency of foster care and associated flexible care – approach the market to test how to make the significant change needed. Commission a task and finish group of the Corporate Parenting Board to oversee this work.
- Adopt a formal scheme which incentivises foster carers to stay in touch with care leavers who have lived with them and their family
- Invest in foster carers to support young people in life journey work
- Create greater sufficiency of provision locally for children with SEN- alternative provision, support development of 2 local specialist schools, and other specialist and new provision across the County to enable some children to remain at home and or be offered a shared care arrangement. To complete the current alternative provision review.
- The number of children in care placed more than 20 miles from their original home. At present (7th April 2015) the number and % of looked after children placed within the West of Berkshire, or within 20 miles of the West of Berkshire border: 53 (73%)
- The number and % of children placed beyond 20 miles of the West of Berkshire border: 20 (27%).
- Set target to improve/ensure all new short and long term foster placements are within 20 miles of the child's home community.

(iv) To improve provision for Care leavers in Wokingham

In 2014/15 the Children in Care Council facilitated a survey to ask care leavers if the Council has delivered on the promises set out within the **Care Leaver's Charter**. The survey had a 42% response rate. The feedback was generally positive; despite some individual young people being distressingly let down by us in the lack of attention to detail and information sharing in the past about their heritage and life journey.

The areas care leavers need services and support to improve were:

- (1) The expectations of the personal advisors need to be more clearly defined
- (2) That all care leavers files have an up to date genogram added to their files and these are shared with care leavers
- (3) That each care leaver is offered the opportunity to have an appointment with their P.A. in addition to statutory visits, to specifically share any information the young person feels they need about their background.

What has gone well?

- Our care leavers told us that overall the promises set out in the **Care Leavers Charter** have been delivered
- 40% of our care leavers are in education, employment or training. For these individuals this is an achievement
- The Council adopted the Young People's Housing Strategy
- The Staying Put policy was refreshed for launch in April 2015. 4 young people (2 with in house carers, 2 with IFA carers) were in a staying put arrangement in 13/14 and have remained in these arrangements.
- The Launch of Elevate: young people visiting Elevate Wokingham seek advice on education, employment and training. The Elevate Wokingham will:
 - Develop a programme of pre-apprenticeship activities to prepare some of our most vulnerable young people with care leavers as a specific priority group for a Wokingham Borough Council supported apprenticeship.
 - Engage vulnerable young people as soon as possible to offer a variety work experience opportunities at Wokingham Borough Council and with other local businesses
 - Build a robust data base of vulnerable young people who might be suitable for apprenticeships- through links developed with Here4U, YOS, targeted youth service, Families First, Adviza, Optalis and JCP etc.
- Apprenticeships:
 - Wokingham Borough Council Human Resources will notify Elevate Wokingham who will communicate the vacancies to vulnerable young people. Wokingham Borough Council will guarantee various groups such as care leavers an interview.
 - There are currently two care leavers with the council undertaking apprenticeships
 - Refer suitable young people who would be interested in taking on an apprenticeship and offer more support to do so, in order to make a good match.
 - Elevate Wokingham staff will help managers choose the most appropriate education course and provider for their apprenticeship.
- Launch of Shutters café pilot, which creates a platform from which to grow a robust pathway and create an impact for care leavers.
- Mainstreaming of the H4U United football team, and the associated individual achievements in employment etc.

- ICT project pilot in partnership with the Children in Care Council will underpin policy changes in 2015.

Impacts

- One of the football teams won the championship last season (2015). A team won the premier division in 2014. The team as a whole also won team of the year at Get Berkshire Active Awards.
- A care leaver was supported by a council initiative to set up her own business
- As of the end of April, 94% of care leavers that we are in touch with are in suitable accommodation. Under five care leavers are in custody.

What are we worried about

- Lack of co-ordinated virtual school input for our care leavers
- Pace of change associated with housing strategy, linked to under Strategic Development Location developments
- Transitions for children in care/care leavers who transition into adult focussed services, to ensure they receive all they are entitled to as care leavers
- The number of parents in our care leaver cohort
- Sufficient independent oversight of our care leavers pathway plans
- Lack of connectivity and offer Targeted Youth Services- Duke of Edinburgh scheme and care leavers to enhance their life experiences and life chances
- Continued lack of supported lodgings carers available
- Under five care leavers are in custody

Next steps

- Ensuring pace and delivery of Young People's Housing Strategy
- Agree Council targets for apprenticeships within and across council for care leavers and other vulnerable groups
- Extension of shutters café and pathways
- Establishing the links and benefits of DoE and care leavers work, football club and other opportunities
- Extension of leisure/wellbeing project to young women care leavers (building on the football initiative)
- Formalising the pathway/offer for adult education
- Maximising the offer from FNP to care leavers
- Maximising the Children's Centre offer to young parent care leavers
- Establish mentoring scheme to lead to sustainable and meaningful relationships for those leaving care and beyond
- Establishing a drop in scheme for young adults who are no longer care leavers but who want to access some familiar support

(v) To improve the educational outcomes for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham

“A good education is one of the most important assets which parents can pass on to their children. Local authorities, as corporate parents, have a responsibility to make sure that they encourage a culture of high aspiration and support for the children they look after”

- All Children in care must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is reviewed in conjunction with their Child in Care Review. The PEP forms part of their care plan. The below table highlights some data collected around completion of PEP's.

PEPs	2012/2013 (as at 31 March 2013)	2013/2014 (as at 31 March 2014)	2014/2015 (as at 31 March 2015)	As at 24 April 2015
Children in care	88	75	74	73
Children aged 2 years or under	12 (7 yp aged 18 still recorded as LAC)	7 (5 yp aged 18 still recorded as LAC)	6	7
Children in range for PEP	69	63	68	64
Children aged 3- 17 with a recent PEP (During current academic year)	59 (85.5%)	55 (87.3%)	54 (80.6%)	56 (87.5%)
Total number of PEP's outstanding	10 (14.5%)	8 (12.7%)	14 (19.4%)	8 (12.5%)

- For those PEP's that are identified as outstanding are due to the child/young person not being in provision, are an asylum seeker, are in hospital or are new starters.
- Review of children in care receiving part-time provision:
 - All children and young people have an entitlement to access full-time education or a reduced offer. Packages of Alternative Provision may be offered.
 - We currently have 3 young people in receipt of part-time tuition equivalent to 10 hours per week and have also been referred to Alternative Provision (JAC) for additional learning opportunities. Two of these young people are starting at their identified new provision at the start of the summer term 2015 and will be in receipt of full-time provision at their new school placements. One of these placements has been significantly delayed through some confusion and inaction on the

part of the Local Authority with responsibility for that young person as he resides in their area.

- We have one placement outstanding for a child in care who is not engaging with school and will be 16 by the end of this academic year. There is another case where the young person resides out of our Borough and so it is that Local Authority that needs to identify and action the placement.
- Analysis of Exclusions Information Academic Year 2014 -2015 to date:
 - Educational provision effectiveness for children in care is scrutinised on a termly basis through a review of PEPs and through the dedicated Governor role for children in care.
 - Exclusions for all children and young people are reported on a monthly basis and considered at the termly Behaviour Lead and annual Attendance Lead meetings. For children in care this is further considered by the Executive Head at the monthly children in care meetings. For those children and young people who are in care and have identified complex needs this is further considered at the newly convened Children in Care SEN Joint Lead meetings. This group has had a positive impact both on the resolution of placements and identifying key performance issues such as exclusions.

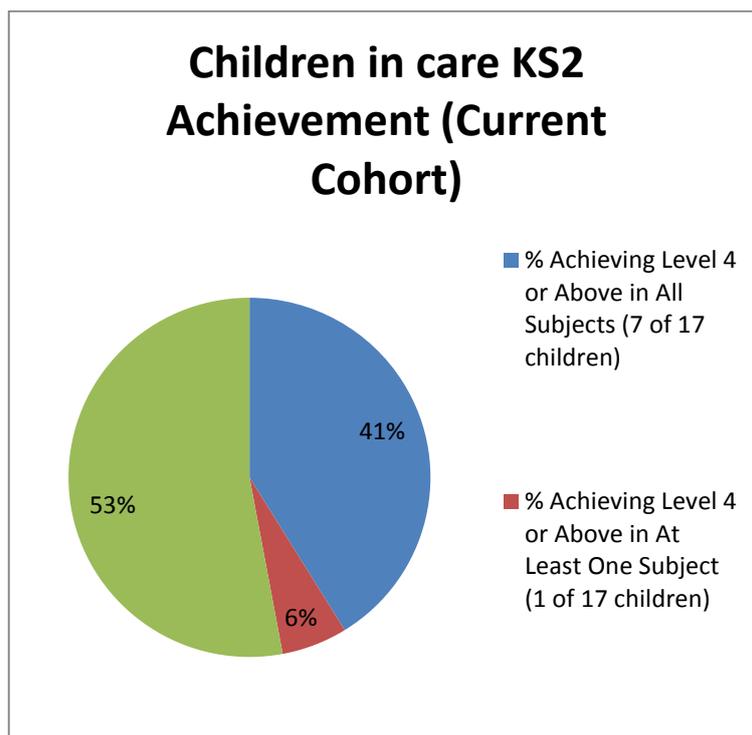
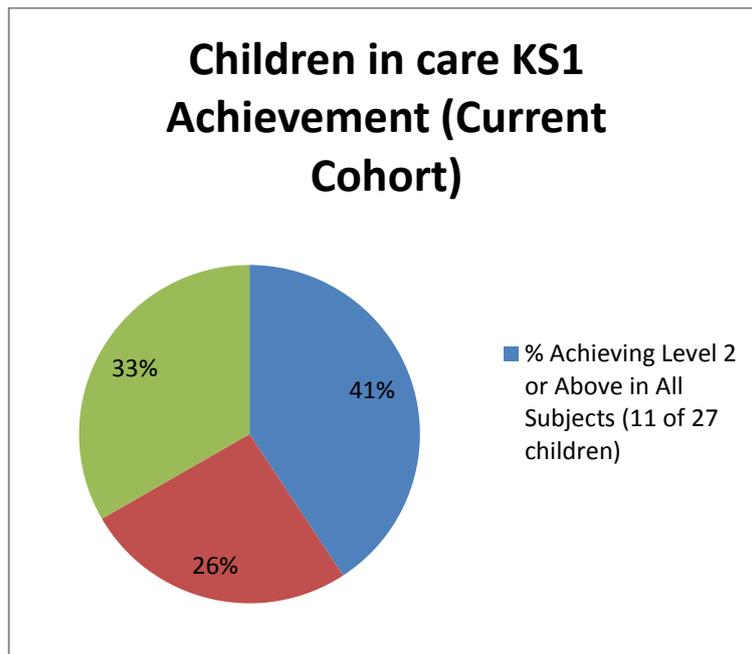
Fixed Term Exclusions for Academic Year 2014/2015 up to end of March:

Term	Number of pupils	Number of days	Type of exclusion	Reason
Autumn	1	1.5	Fixed	PDB
	1 (*)	5	Fixed	PDB
Spring	1	.5	Fixed	PDB
	1	.5	Fixed	PDB
	1(*)	5	Fixed	PDB
	1	2	Fixed	PDB

Key: PDB = Persistent Disruptive Behaviour (*) = same child

- In total 5 young people have received fixed term exclusions for demonstrating persistent disruptive behaviours and not responding to the measures put in place by the schools. Fixed term exclusions were actioned by the following schools;
 - 1 special school
 - 1 Pupil Referral Unit
 - 1 Mainstream secondary school
- There were no permanent exclusions recorded for this academic year.

Impact



- Of the 9 children who achieved below national expectations, 2 children achieved level 3 in all subjects and were thus just below the expected attainment level. 7 of the 9 children had a statement of special educational needs (6 of the SEN children attend Special Schools).
- No national data is published on the educational attainment of our children in care at KS4/GCSE due to low numbers.

ICT for Children in care

- Children's Services have provided laptops for children in care since 2009 and the feedback has been positive.
- As part of the package we commission insurance, support and helpline for children in care or their carers up to 9pm in the evenings and at weekends.
- Feedback from children in care is that they would like a choice of a range of devices. We are piloting a range of devices with children in care and will be launching the availability of wider choice for children in care early in the summer term.
- The aim is that when a child in care needs a computer device, they will be provided with a list of possible devices to choose from, they will make their choice and then the device will be provided by our provider. The list should be available in May 2015 and at that point we may then want to trial a device or two with some children in care; this should realistically be possible early in the Summer term.
- We have investigated a partnership arrangement with 02 in order for those children not in education to access the same range of devices that any young person would expect. It is proposed that this works by
 - Council setting a budget
 - Young person meets with 02 tech Guru to run through options
 - Young person decides on tech
 - Council orders it
- We have a group of young people lined up to pilot this and feedback.

What has gone well?

- Taken the opportunity to significantly reshape the approach: reconfigured learning services and created virtual school with an Executive, with a specific Head for children in care and care leavers. This structural and cultural approach adds capacity, focus through integration, sharing of skill, actual additional capacity and cross service configuration which recognises the complex needs of our children in care.
- Management committee being identified at latter end of 2014/15 for virtual school which includes elected members, educationalists, a representative of Children in Care Council, governor from local school and local business leaders.
- Director of Children's Services became chair of skills board which commissioned the new Elevate Wokingham project which offers advice and support into learning and employment, and acts as the champion for apprentices across the Council
- Refreshed and reconfigured networks between LA and designated teachers in local schools to become part of virtual school
- SEND reforms implementation and pilot schemes have been successful
- The new adult and community strategy is based around partnerships both internal and external, targeted at needs of service users prioritising vulnerable care leavers and others at risk of not participating in learning.

What are we worried about

- In 2014 we aimed to, but didn't achieve an extension of the virtual heads focus to under 5 and over 16
- Role of the Pupil Referral Unit, the functioning of the PRU and the impact on our children in care
- Lack of co-ordinated alternative provision and resource bases established in the borough and the impact on placement options (distance from home etc.)
- The number of children in care on part time role, or who were off role for a period of time in 2014
- Delay in the Virtual Head extending to care leavers

Next steps

- Full audit and mapping of all children in care and young people's education placements and f/t equivalence.
- Full audit of out of borough child in care placements and full-time equivalence.
- Where Belonging Regulations apply to out of borough placements – ensure activity is tracked and challenged where inappropriate or lacking in timeliness.
- Ensure that we meet our obligations in delivering Belonging Regulations for children placed in Wokingham that are in the care of other authorities.
- Consolidate integrated/robust approach to children in care on part time role
- Discussions with the identified school settings actioning exclusions will be held to establish the difficulties experienced and explore future options to reduce need for exclusions.
- Monitoring and reporting on children in care exclusions will be prioritised with the Executive Head receiving immediate notification or preferably early warning of likely exclusions so interventions can be actioned
- Establishment of Virtual School roll – monitoring of attendance and reporting through VSCH staff (Designated Teachers) any issues with attendance patterns or potential exclusions.
- Dedicated Education Welfare Officer for children in care to follow up attendance issues.
- Dedicated EPS for children in care to support where negative behaviours are in evidence to prevent escalation to persistent levels.
- Complete the alternative provision review and negotiate, commission, reshape and establish partnerships with range of providers to ensure sufficient, varied and sustainable alternative provision options by the summer term 2015.
- Establish and embed the new management committee of the virtual school
- Launch new allowances for children in care and care leavers who go to college and not university
- Establish bursary for care leavers who want to go back to learning

- Establish and promote pathway to learning (p/t) for care leavers who have entered work but do not yet have a maths and English GCSE and vocational qualifications
- Ensure 2 year old offer follows the child even when they have entered care system
- Test take up and promote nursery education for under 4's who enter short term care as well as long term care to ensure school readiness

(vi) To improve health provision for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham

The strategy set out some of the existing and potential challenges for the Council as Corporate Parents in ensuring the health needs of children in care and care leavers are well provided for.

What has gone well?

- Championing across all health agencies the needs of children in care and care leavers, and advocating for appropriate priority in the commissioning intentions of those agencies. In 2014 a more rigorous commissioning framework was established for comprehensive CAMHS as part of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Partnership focus on improving the emotional health and wellbeing of all vulnerable children, including children in care. Monthly meetings have assured the partnership that Children in Care have been prioritised in the context of a rising high demand for CAMHS. However case monitoring in this process continues to identify Looked After Children not always receiving the multi-agency emotional health support they need. A joint strategy and action plan to improve access and effectiveness of services will be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in May 2015
- Recommendations of how Corporate Parenting can best be taken forward and enhanced in this changing environment with reference to the new Public Health responsibilities of local authorities, the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the role of GP Consortia. As we take on the public health commissioning duties we are making inroads with health visitors, priority support for children in care, and improved access with FNP. There is a GP on Children and Young People's Partnership Board which is enabling greater links with GP Practices.

Impact

- The below data shows consistently positive performance with regard to children in care being registered with a GP or health centre

	2012/13 (as at 31 March)	2013/1413 (as at 31 March)	2014/1513 (as at 31 March)
LAC with GP or Health Centre	Not monitored	100%	100%

recorded			
----------	--	--	--

- We are required to provide information on the emotional and behavioural health of children and young people in their care. This data is collected by us through a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and a summary figure for each child is submitted to the DfE through the SSSA903 data return.

	2013/2014 (as at 31 March 2014)	2014/2015 (as at 31 March)	As at 24 April 2015
Children in care	41 in care for 12 months	73	73
Children aged 3 years or under		9	9
Children aged 17		8	6
Children in range for SDQ		56	56
Children aged 4-16 with a recent SQD	36 (63.4%)	33 (58.9%)	46 (82.1%)
Total number of SDQ's outstanding		23	8

- By the end of April, Children aged 4-16 with a recent SDQ had risen to 92.7%
- The below table identifies the timeliness of health assessments being completed within 12 months.

	2012/13 (as at 31 March)	2013/14 (as at 31 March)	2014/15 (as at 31 March)
Total LAC	81	68	73*
Completed within past 12 months	75 (92.6%)	46 (67.6%)	39 (53.4%)

NB: 1 child left care in very early April – will be corrected for SSSA903 submission

- By the end of April, the number of health assessments completed had risen to 67.1%
- The below table identifies dental checks completed on time

	2012/13 (as at 31 March)	2013/14 (as at 31 March)	2014/15 (as at 31 March)
% dental checks completed on time	100%	81.8%	89.6%

What are we worried about

- Securing CAMHS and emotional well-being services for children in care and care leavers
- Securing the pathway to FNP and close services for contraception/self-esteem work with our children in care and care leavers to avoid young parenthood
- The gaps in life story work for some of children in care and care leavers as identified in audit and via Children in Care Council advocacy
- The need to secure ongoing focus on permanency as identified in audit work – as permanency is linked to sense of self, place and security and overall emotional wellbeing
- Timeliness of health assessments.

Appendix 1 – Updated Strategic Delivery Plan to follow

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 27.

TITLE	Children's Services Performance Monitoring
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 September 2015
WARD	None Specific
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Judith Ramsden, Strategic Director of Children's Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Children's Services performance indicators underpin the council's priorities and principles to focus on every child reaching their potential and looking after the vulnerable.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children's Service performance indicators be noted.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee means that the latest indicators available for formal reporting this cycle are the Quarterly indicators reported at the end of June 2015. More recent internal monitoring information has been provided.

Background

A set of information on performance indicators is provided to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive on a regular basis. The most recent report, providing information for Children's Services covering the quarter to June 2015, is provided as Appendix A to this report.

Analysis of Issues

No indicators were rated red or amber in June 2015.

Since this report was produced, we now have "provisional" data relating to some of the education results:

Indicator	Target	14/15 Actual	15/16 Qtr. 1 Actual
Reduce the education gap at KS2 level 4 between disadvantaged and other pupils for Reading, Writing and Maths		Summer 2014 Other 87% Disadvant 65% Gap 22%	Summer 2015 Other 88% Disadvant 64% Gap 24% <i>(Provisional)</i>
Reduce the education gap at KS4 level 4 between disadvantaged and other pupils for 5 A*-C GCSE incl E&M		Summer 2014 Other 70.6% Disadvant 36.8% Gap 33.8%	<i>Not released until January 2016</i>
% Pupils achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage in academic year 14-15.	Increase	Summer 2014 61%	Summer 2015 70%
% Disadvantaged pupils achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage in academic year 14-15	Increased attainment & reduced gap	Summer 2014 Other 62% Disadvant 35% Gap 27%	Summer 2015 Other 71% Disadvant 51% Gap 20% <i>(FSM provisional)</i>

As stated in the previous report, the indicators for use in corporate reports and their associated target, have been discussed by the Corporate Leadership Team and will be used in all reporting to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Not applicable		

Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Not applicable		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Not applicable		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services and priorities?)

n/a

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

n/a

List of Background Papers

None

Contact Brian Grady
Telephone No 0118 974 6055

Service Children's Services
Email
Judith.ramsden@wokingham.gov.uk

Date 11th September 2015

Version No. 1

This page is intentionally left blank

**Council Plan Performance
Monitoring
Q1 2015/16**



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Community		Place	
Look after vulnerable people		Provide affordable homes	
Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life		Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency	
Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential		Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well-designed development	
		Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough	
Performance		Business	
Offer excellent value for your Council Tax		Invest in regenerating towns and village, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth	
Deliver quality in all that we do, including the statutory services for which we are responsible			
Improve the customer experience when accessing Council Services			
Workforce			

Community



Look after vulnerable people

Key Indicators

Indicator	Target	14/15 Actual	15/16 Qtr. 1 Actual	RAG	Direction of Travel (Better/Worse/No change)	Strategic Director / Executive Member	Commentary
% referrals in 15/16 which are repeat referrals within 12 months of a previous referral to Children's Social Care	18 - 22%	21.3%	18.2%	Green	Better	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	
% Children who are currently subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) who are subject to a CPP for a second or subsequent time within 24 months	3 – 7%	12.0%	9.1%	Green	Better	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	Although seeming high, this represents 2 children returning to a plan. Repeat plans continue last year's trend of decreasing numbers.
% Care Proceedings completed in 15/16 within 26 weeks of application	100%	42%	n/a		n/a	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	The Joint Legal Team calculate that 42% of Wokingham cases were finalised within 26 weeks during 2014/5 – 26 weeks is a national target, with Reading Court currently averaging around 31 weeks. In Q1 of 15/16 no cases have yet been completed.

Community



Indicator	Target	14/15 Actual	15/16 Qtr. 1 Actual	RAG	Direction of Travel (Better/Worse/No change)	Strategic Director / Executive Member	Commentary
% Looked After Children living within 20 miles of their home	70 – 75%	62.2%	65.7%	Green	Better	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	Work underway continues to increase the number of children living closer to home
Looked After Children who achieved permanent care arrangements during previous 12 months	Over 30%	40.2%	35.2%	Green	n/a	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	The 2014/5 outturn was better than average due to specific activity with a larger family. Permanence work is a key focus for 2015/6.

Community



Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Key Indicators

Indicator	Target	14/15 Actual	15/16 Qtr. 1 Actual	RAG	Direction of Travel (Better/ Worse/ No change)	Strategic Director / Executive Member	Commentary
Reduce the education gap at KS2 level 4 between disadvantaged and other pupils for Reading, Writing and Maths		Summer 2014 Other 87% Disadvant 65% Gap 22%	n/a		n/a	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	No detailed information on Summer 2015 examinations will be released until late autumn
Reduce the education gap at KS4 level 4 between disadvantaged and other pupils for 5 A*-C GCSE incl E&M		Summer 2014 Other 70.6% Disadvant 36.8% Gap 33.8%	n/a		n/a	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	No detailed information on Summer 2015 examinations will be released until January
% Primary Schools with a current Ofsted Rating of "good" or better.	88%	83%	83% 41 schools	Green	No change	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	End of Summer term data will be published by Ofsted in the autumn
% of established Secondary Schools with a current Ofsted rating of "good" or better.	100%	100%	89% 8 schools	Green	No change	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	End of Summer term data will be published by Ofsted in the autumn. Oakbank School is not counted in this indicator

Community



67

Indicator	Target	14/15 Actual	15/16 Qtr. 1 Actual	RAG	Direction of Travel (Better/Worse/No change)	Strategic Director / Executive Member	Commentary
% Children who attend at Wokingham school who are at a school with an Ofsted rating of "good" or better.	90%	88%	88%	Green	No change	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	End of Summer term data will be published by Ofsted in the autumn
% Pupils achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage in academic year 14-15.	Increase	Summer 2014 61%	n/a		n/a	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	No information on Summer 2015 examinations will be released until the autumn
% Disadvantaged pupils achieving a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage in academic year 14-15	Increased attainment & reduced gap	Summer 2014 Other 62% Disadvant 35% Gap 27%	n/a		n/a	Judith Ramsden/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	No detailed information on Summer 2015 examinations will be released until late autumn

Community



Major Projects					
Project	Estimated Completion Date	RAG	Direction of Travel (Better/Worse/No change)	Strategic Director / Executive Member	Commentary
Secondary School in the South	September 2017	Green	No change	Heather Thwaites/ Charlotte Haitham Taylor	Work has started on site, key activity being site remediation and preparation. Bohunt Education Trust has been appointed as the educational provider.

TITLE	Virtual School Annual Report
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 September 2015
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR	Judith Ramsden, Director Children’s Services

<p>OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY</p> <p>More effective education for disadvantaged pupils, and better life-chances for them</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>That the report is noted.</p>
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>The report describes the re-launch of Wokingham’s Virtual School for looked-after pupils, indicating its ambition to champion the interests of a wider range of vulnerable groups of pupils. The structure, resourcing and priorities of the Virtual school are shown along with indications of impact and next steps.</p>

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The Virtual school works by co-ordinating existing resources to focus on the interests of disadvantaged groups.

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

n/a

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

n/a

List of Background Papers

Virtual School Annual Report annexed

Contact	Alan Stubbersfield	Service	Children's Services
Telephone No	0118 974 6121	Email	alan.stubbersfield@wokingham.gov.uk
Date	14 September 2015	Version No	2



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Virtual School

Annual Report

Academic Year 2014/2015

Wokingham Borough Council has pledged to provide excellent education for all children and young people in its care.

The Virtual School supports the delivery of this pledge through ensuring ambition, aspiration and achievement are at the heart of the educational careers and experiences of all such vulnerable children and young people.

Contents		
Item	Subject	Page
1	Corporate Parenting Strategy	3
2	Wokingham Context	5
3	Virtual School	6
4	School Roll	9
5	School Placements	10
6	Personal Education Plans	12
7	Tuition	13
8	Resources	13
9	Attendance	15
10	Exclusions	15
11	Performance, Progress and Achievement	16
12	Next Steps	19

1: Corporate Parenting Strategy

The Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategy 2015-2017 sets out the priorities and pledges of Wokingham Borough's Corporate Parenting Board and the statutory framework this operates within. The quality of education forms a key element of this and steers the priorities of the Virtual School.

Priorities for 2015 – 2017:

1. To ensure the strength and effectiveness of the role of the Corporate Parenting Board thus its impact on the Corporate Parenting function of the Council as a whole
2. To strengthen the voice of children in care and care leavers in planning, reviewing and decision making
3. To consolidate progress and continue to improve the timeliness of permanency for children in care across the range of permanent options
4. To improve provision for care leavers in Wokingham
5. To improve educational outcomes for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham (see below)
6. To improve health provision for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham

Pledges to Children in Care:

1. Give you a home where you belong
2. Make sure you get an excellent Education (see below)
3. Help you have a Healthy lifestyle
4. To ensure you have fun
5. Listen to and value your opinions
6. Help and support you on the road to adulthood and:

Pledges to Care Leavers:

1. To respect and honour your identity
2. To believe in you
3. To listen to you
4. To inform you
5. To support you
6. To find you a home
7. To be a lifelong champion

Priority 5: To improve educational outcomes for children in care and care leavers in Wokingham

Pledge 2: Make sure you get an excellent Education

Whilst Priority 5 and Pledge 2 identify the focus and commitment on securing the best educational experiences and outcomes for the children and young people in our care the work of the Virtual School contributes to the delivery of all priorities and pledges.

2: Wokingham Context

The number of children in care in Wokingham has remained relatively stable for the past few years with the highest number being 86 as at March 2013, and the lowest being 72 as at March 2012. At the end of the last academic year – July 2015 - we had a total of 69 in care.

27 of the 69 were female with 42 male, the majority of whom fell within the 11-16 and 16+ age groups. This is in keeping with the trends for Wokingham Borough Council over recent years as evidenced in Corporate Parenting Board reporting.

Children in care: Rate per 10,000 Children				
<u>Area</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Wokingham	21.0	20.0	24.0	20.0
SE Region	46.0	47.0	47.0	48.0
Statistical neighbours	37.9	37.8	37.9	39.4
England	58.0	59.0	60.0	60.0

Wokingham has a consistently lower population of children in care when measured against regional, statistical and national benchmarks. This comparative data is not yet available for 2015 but with our number of 69 at the end of this academic year being within our previous range the trend of lower numbers is set to continue.

3: Wokingham Virtual School

Wokingham Virtual School Development and Delivery 2014/2015

3.1: Virtual School Structure

As part of Wokingham's commitment to the improvement of outcomes for all children and young people in its care the redevelopment of the Virtual School was undertaken and the new school launched in April 2015. Staffing indicated below comprises LA officers and school staff organised to enhance impact of their "day jobs" in school improvement and children's social care, and replicate roles in schools.



The structure is designed to ensure that expertise is available across all phases and types of schools in order to ensure that our children and young people receive the best possible support within their schools. We are able to engage with all schools and settings from a point of knowledge and understanding about their particular responsibilities and this facilitates positive working relationships and effective support and challenge as required.

3.2: Management Board

The quality assurance of the Virtual School operation is overseen by a Management Board with representation from a broad group of people with relevant expertise and experience. Again this reflects the position of a school with its governing body.

Board Membership:

- Debbie Scriven: Former Charitable Trustee and accountant
- Gareth Marr: Experienced in Adoption
- Ian Pittock: WBC Councillor – Deputy Lead Member for Children’s Services and representative of Corporate Parenting Board
- Dave Whiting: Experienced Secondary School Governor and chair
- TBC:
 - Care Leaver Representative
 - Foster Care Representative
 - Health Care Representative
 - Elevate Representative
 - Designated LAC Teacher Representative

Invitations have been sent out to potential candidates to fill these vacancies in time for the next meeting in November 2015.

The termly meetings are supported and facilitated by members of the Virtual School Leadership team with representation also from the Children’s Services Leadership Team – Alan Stubbersfield, Assistant Director for Learning and Achievement.

3.3: Operational Links

The Virtual School has established operational and reporting links with key management groups within the Borough. These include the Children’s Services Leadership team, the Corporate Parenting Board, the Local Children’s Safeguarding Board, the Primary and Secondary Safeguarding Groups, the Joint CICESEN management group, the CIC Education management group and the Designated LAC

Teacher support group. These links and shared membership enable the Virtual School to ensure that each child on roll receives the best possible support and that effective monitoring and sharing of information and best practice raises standards and expectations of outcomes.

3.4: Wider links

In order to be ambitious and successful for the children and young people in our care it is crucial to be as ambitious for the quality and effectiveness of the Virtual School. To this end we have participated in the South East Regional Network for Virtual Schools and meetings with HMI and Ofsted, focusing on best practice and have contributed to the work of the ADCS/DfE Virtual School Working Party. These wider links have provided information and advice on best practice which we have incorporated into the operation of our Virtual School.

3.5: School Development Plan

The first priority for the re-launched Virtual School was to construct a School Development Plan to outline developmental and service priorities for the next three years. This plan has shaped the development activities for the new Virtual School and outlines the key actions across all phases for the next three years.

The key priorities reflect national guidance:

- “Closing the attainment and progress gap between looked after children and their peers and creating a culture of high aspirations for them is a top priority. We must ensure that the educational attainment of these children is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.”

(‘Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities’ DfE 2014)

The plan is reviewed through the half termly School Leadership Team meetings with a report on progress to both the CSLT and Management Board.

4: Virtual School Roll

From the outset it was intended that the Wokingham Virtual School would cater for a broad range of vulnerable children and young people as all such groups would benefit from the focused approach and attention such a school can offer.

The key priority groups on the current school roll are as follows:

- Children in Care
- Looked After Children
- Care Leavers
- Special Guardianship Orders
- Permanence Adoption

Additional targeted groups to be included in 2015-16 include:

- Children Missing Education
- Elective Home Education
- Free School Meals cohorts
- Children on a Child Protection Plan

The number of pupils on the Virtual School roll is maintained as a live data report with data amended as changes occur. Systems are in place to ensure that immediate notification is given of new children coming into the system so that the Virtual School Head can check on placement and action the 10 working day education planning.

At the end of last academic year the CIC/LAC cohort consisted of 69 children and young people: 27 were female with 42 male, the majority of whom fell within the 11-16 and 16+age groups.

Age	Number
Early Years	5
Primary	12
11-16	42
16+	10
TOTAL	69

School Roll as of 31st July 2015:

School Roll Category	Number
CIC	71
LAC	32
Care Leavers	35
SGO	2
Adoption	7
Total: 147	

5: School Placements

Management and overview of school placements

5.1: Quality:

Key to the quality of educational outcomes for children and young people is the quality of the setting in which they are placed. As part of the Virtual School activity every setting is reviewed in terms of recent Ofsted inspection reports and placement made into good or better schools. Where a school under inspection drops below this grade then a review of placement is undertaken along with a visit by the appropriate member of the leadership team to review improvement plans and ensure the pupil placed is receiving the best support possible. Should a school fail to make rapid improvement then a change of provision is actioned. This quality assurance process is in place in relation to the 3 RI schools below.

Placement grades as at July 2015:

Grade	Number
Outstanding	20
Good	34
Requires improvement	3
Unsatisfactory	0
Not applicable	4

5.2: Stability:

Research from the REED Foundation and Oxford University clearly evidences the requirement to maintain stability of school placements in order to achieve the best outcomes especially at KS4 and we work to achieve this stability.

CIC/LAC pupils attending number of schools during academic year 2014/2015:

1	2	3	4+
59	4	1	0

5.3: Types of Setting:

CIC/LAC pupil placements within Wokingham

Early Years	Primary	Secondary	FE	Special	AP
1	4	11	0	6	2

CICLAC pupil placements out of borough

Early Years	Primary	Secondary	FE	Special	AP
0	3	14	5	12	6

Total pupil numbers placed in residential

Phase	In Borough	Out of Borough
Early Years	0	0
Primary	0	0
Secondary	0	2
FE	0	0
Special	0	9
Totals	0	11

Total numbers NEET: 2 students that were NEET as of the 31st July 2015 have now started college placements.

6: Personal Education Plans

6.1: PEPs

During the academic year 2014-15, there have been 99 CIC/LAC children and young people between the ages of 0-18. 38 children came into the care system during the academic year, 25 of these required a PEP detailing education targets and progress. 9 were on roll for less than 10 days and 4 were below the start age. In total, 30 children came off our roll during the year by virtue of age or change in circumstance.

Depending on when the child came into care and their age, all children and young people between the ages of 2 years 10 months and 18 years have had a minimum of one PEP review meeting this academic year, attended by a member of the Virtual School Leadership Team. The specific expertise of the staff member was matched to the stage, ability and needs of the child to add best possible value to the PEP meeting, ensuring the targets were robust, progress was accurately reported and next steps transition discussions were appropriate.

Stage	Cohort number	% PEPs completed from eligible cohort		
		Autumn	Spring	Summer
EYFS	1	None	100%	100%
Primary	7	16.7%	100%	100%
Secondary	25	47.8%	88.5%	100%
Post-16	5	66.7%	75.0%	100%
Special	18	37.5%	100%	100%
Alternative Provision	8	14.3%	85.7%	85.7%

83% of children and young people have had two or more PEP meetings. 37.5% of children had an autumn term PEP, 67% had a spring term PEP and 97% had a summer term PEP, indicating improvements with the re-launch. In the majority of cases, this has enabled the child or young person's progress to be monitored against targets and for timely interventions to be arranged as required. In a minority of cases, where the education placement has broken down, these meetings have provided the opportunity for discussion about suitable alternative arrangements.

6.2: Pupil Premium

Following Wokingham Borough Council's decision in 2014 to delegate the allocated pupil premium grant in full by three instalments, this arrangement was honoured again this year and the appropriate spending of these funds formed an integral part of the PEP meeting. Examples of the range of activities this funding has supported this year are: additional 1 to 1 tuition in a range of subjects, individual mentoring, therapies, extra-curricular activities and specific items to support learning. All schools are required to demonstrate the impact of this funding on raising achievement and to record this impact on the PEP documents, to enable the virtual school to account for this funding.

7: Tuition

7.1: Tuition:

A key strategy to improving the educational outcomes and achievements for our pupils is the provision of tuition support in order to maximise their learning. These opportunities are identified through PEP planning and allocated according to need.

13 students have been in receipt of additional tuition during 2014/2015. Subjects include English, Maths, Science and French.

Music tuition is offered to all pupils and supported through Berkshire Maestros. In 2014/2015 12 pupils took up this option.

For 2015/2016 the Virtual School will be encouraging improved up-take of this offer.

7.2: Extra-curricular activities:

To support and deliver on the 'fun' and experience pledge made to our pupils all are encouraged and supported to take part in additional activities both in and out of school. Such activities are again discussed and identified through the PEP process and resources allocated to support if required. Examples of such activities this year have included membership of professional youth drama group, participation in school trips and holidays.

8: Resources

8.1: Literacy

To support children in their literacy development and to assist in fostering a love of reading, the Virtual School has continued to subscribe to the national Letterbox Book Club. Every child from year one to eight inclusive has received a pack of ability related books every month over the period May to October. Evaluation of the scheme suggests that whilst some of the children appreciated receiving the books to support their personal reading and reading with/to their carers, the more able readers did not find the material so engaging. This will be reviewed.

Total number of students receiving books : **30**

8.2: ICT

Having access to suitable ICT to support learning is a crucial element to improved learning outcomes. It is also common practice for all children and young people to have access to such technology. Hence the Virtual School ensures that all those requiring such kit have the correct standard of ICT equipment to meet their needs. Such allocations are identified and reviewed through the PEP process and replacement considered after three years in order to maintain quality standards of resourcing to meet the growing demands of education as the pupils' progress. Such support is also reviewed for those moving on to college where a higher specification may be required for their courses. One such case this year has been the requirement for ICT to support a student in accessing a higher level science degree course.

In 2014/2015 a total of 30 laptops were purchased with 27 currently allocated.

During this year it became evident that the ICT support system would be improved by moving to a system where CIC and care leavers are provided with a choice of mobile technology devices including small, medium and large laptops, tablets/iPads and convertible devices. The system for this was set up in the summer 2015 and a leaflet including a range of devices has been distributed. Early signs are that this more flexible approach has been well received.

9: Attendance

The attendance for CIC/LAC attending Wokingham schools was as follows:

Range	Number	Percentage
100%	0	0%
98%-99%	5	21%
95%-97%	6	25%
92%-94%	4	17%
85%-89%	5	21%
80%-83%	2	8%
Summary		
92%-99%	16	63%
80%-89%	7	29%
Low attenders		
33%	1	4%
2%	1	4%

4 pupils (16.7%) have attendance below 85% and are therefore classed as persistent absentees (PA).

The dedicated EWO for the Virtual School is monitoring attendance for all CIC/LAC.

10: Exclusions

Data from the EWS team evidences the following fixed term exclusions for 2014/2015:

Fixed Term Exclusions			
Pupil	Number of exclusions	Total Days	Reasons
1	1	1	Persistent disruptive behaviour
2	1	2.5	Physical assault on an adult
3	1	1	Verbal abuse/threaten adult
4	3	1.5	Persistent disruptive behaviour x 2 Physical assault on an adult
5	4	8.5	Damage Persistent disruptive behaviour x 3
6	1	0.5	Persistent disruptive behaviour
6 pupils	11 exclusions	15 days	

On further analysis pupils 1 and 5 were excluded from their secondary school placements, pupils 2, 4 and 6 were excluded from their special school placements, pupil 3 was excluded from a primary school.

There were no permanent exclusions for CIC/LAC.

11: Pupil Performance, Progress and Achievement

The following table shows the trend in performance over the past five years

Indicator	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	No of pupils	No in cohort								
KS1 L2c and above in Maths and Eng	1	3	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0
KS2 L4c and above in Maths and Eng	4	8	1	1	2	5	3	4	2	5
KS3 L6c and above in Ma,En,Sc	1	4	0	3	1	7	2	8	1	4
GCSE 5 A-Cs	2	11	2	9	1	9	1	7	5	10

More detailed analysis in terms of expected progress indicates the following:

There were no KS1 (age 11) pupils in this cohort.

Key Stage 2

	number	%	boys	girls	SEN	EAL
students making expected progress in English:	3	60%	2	1	3	0
students making expected progress in Maths:	4	80%	3	1	4	0
No of students in cohort	5		3	2	5	0

Three of the five pupils met their targets and can be considered to have made expected progress in both mathematics and English (reading and writing); a further pupil met this performance measure in mathematics but missed the target in English. One of the pupils was entered for GCSE maths at age 11 and achieved a D grade which significantly exceeds the national benchmark. The pupil who did not meet national expectation in either English (reading and writing) or mathematics, narrowly missed her target by one sub level in each case.

Key Stage 3

	number	%	Boys	Girls	SEN	EAL
students making expected progress in English:	3	75%	0	3	1	0
students making expected progress in Maths:	3	75%	1	2	1	0
students making expected progress in Science:	1	25%	0	1	0	0
No of students in cohort	4		1	3	2	0

Although no national tests are required at the end of Key Stage 3, teacher assessment indicated that only one of the four pupils in the KS3 cohort met national expectation of level 6 in all three core subjects. Progress during KS3 was variable across the three subjects with only two pupils making expected or better than expected progress in all three subjects. At KS3, two sub levels of progress per annum which equates to six sub levels or 2 full levels during the key stage is the national expectation.

Key stage 4

3 pupils are excluded from this data set as they became CIC/LAC in July/August 2015 by which time their formal education had finished and their examinations had been taken. This gave an adjusted cohort size of 10.(numbers in bold below)

	number	%	Boys	girls	SEN	EAL
students making expected progress in English:	7 10	70% 77%	5 8	2 2	3 4	2 3
students making expected progress in Maths:	7 8	70 61%	5 6	2 2	3 4	1 1
5A*-C EM	5 5	50% 38%	3 3	2 2	1 1	1 1
5A*-G	6 8	60% 61%	4 6	2 2	1 2	1 2
No of students in cohort	10 13		8 11	2 2	4 5	1 3

The KS4 cohort of ten were entered for a variety of GCSEs and other vocational qualifications and five of these pupils achieved five A* to C grades including English and mathematics. Of the remaining five, one pupil was not entered for any formal qualifications and is currently educated through hospital school. A second pupil who had disengaged from the formal education structure was receiving alternative provision where he completed a range of AQA practical skills modules, but he did not do any formal qualification in English or mathematics. A third pupil, educated in a residential special school, was working on p scales (ie below National Curriculum level 1) and met his targets, based on teacher assessment. The fourth pupil was working at entry level and made expected progress in both English and mathematics. The final pupil made expected progress in English, achieved 5A*-G but significantly underperformed relative to targets.

Post-16

Nine young people were CIC/LAC during the 2014-5 academic year. They were educated in seven different settings. All nine students had personalised education programmes and made positive progress relative to their targets. Seven of the nine students achieved accredited qualifications.

One student was following an AS/A2 programme and completed year 12 with 4 AS levels at grades ABBC. Eight of the nine students did not already have C grades in English and mathematics at GCSE. Five students improved on their English outcome and three students improved on their mathematics outcome from KS4.

A further two students became CICLAC after the end of the summer term.

More detailed information of pupils' progress gathered from PEP review meetings is being collated for the Corporate Parenting Board. The overall picture from this is complex, reflecting the range of issues affecting the young people in question. However the strong indication is that schools know their looked after pupils well, designated teachers fulfil their role effectively, and the pupils make progress relative to their starting positions.

12: Next Steps

The Virtual School for Wokingham was relaunched in April 2015 and has already made significant strides forward in improving the effectiveness and support to the children and young people placed on roll. However, there is a need for continuous review and improvement in order to ensure we provide the best service for the children and young people in our care.

For the next year this will include the following:

- Appointment of permanent full-time Virtual School Headteacher
- Appointment of permanent full-time Education Coordinator
- Additional resource to support the data and information management – 1 day per week
- Implementation of ePEP – electronic record of PEP reviews
- Service Development Plan – delivery of the targets set for 2015/2016
- Detailed monitoring of the continuing progress of care leavers
- Virtual School Conference scheduled for the 8th October 2015 – bringing Children’s Services leaders, Virtual School Leadership Team, Virtual School Management Board, Social Care teams and Designated LAC teachers together to focus on best working practices, attachment theory and adoption

This report evidences the full support and commitment to the improvement of outcomes for all children and young people in the care of Wokingham Borough Council. The investment and development of the new Virtual School is already making a difference and we are eager to see the impact over the first full academic year.

Kathy Roberts.

Interim Executive Head Teacher.

Jay Blundell

Interim Virtual Head Teacher.

This page is intentionally left blank

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
22 Sept	Children's Partnership	To receive a report on the work of the Children's Partnership which is one of as one of the Health & Wellbeing Board Partnership Groups which have responsibility for the implementation of designated programmes within the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. (One of the functions of the Committee is to scrutinise/review the issues that relate to the implementation of designated programmes within the Health & Wellbeing Strategy that relate to children and young people).	To inform the Committee of the activities of the Partnership to allow its work to be scrutinised/reviewed	Judith Ramsden/ Brian Grady
	Draft Primary School Places Strategy	To consider an update on the development of the Primary School Places Strategy	To receive and update on the input of the task & finish group	Judith Ramsden/Piers Brunning

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
	The Process of School Budget Setting and funding allocation	Following a scrutiny request, to consider setting up a review of the process around setting school budgets and funding allocation, including the funding formula and opportunities to influence Government	Review request referred from Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee	Rob Stubbs/Alan Stubbersfield
	Annual Report of Corporate Parenting Board	To receive the annual report of the Corporate Parenting Board	To monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Looked After Children Review	Judith Ramsden/ Head of Safeguarding and Social Care
	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing Item To enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Children's Services Performance & Information Team
	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted reports, School Improvement	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item to enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Head of Learning & Achievement

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
	Children's Services O and S Committee Forward Programme	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing Item	Democratic Services
27 Oct	Review of the Effectiveness of Governing Bodies - Monitoring	To receive a monitoring report on the implementation of the approved recommendations the Report on the review of the Effectiveness of Governing Bodies -	To monitor implementation of the Review recommendations	Head of Learning & Achievement/ Governor Services
	Annual Report of Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board <i>(moved from Sept.)</i>	To consider the Wokingham Local Safeguarding Children Board's (WSCB) Annual Report	To monitor the work of the WSCB	Children's Services /WSCB
	Impact of the Apprenticeship Programme	To receive a report giving details of the programme to provide apprenticeships for young people.	To monitor this provision	
	Delivering Effective Safeguarding Services	To receive a regular update, including the impact of the Early Help and Innovations Programme	Standing item to monitor safeguarding services	Head of Social Care and Intervention

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
	School Improvement and Delivery Model	To receive a report on School Improvement and the Delivery Model	To update the Committee	Head of Learning & Achievement
	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing Item To enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Children's Services Performance & Information Team
	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted reports, School Improvement	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item to enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Head of Learning & Achievement
	Children's Services O and S Committee Forward Programme	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
2 Dec	Primary School Place Strategy	To receive and update on the implementation of the strategy	To monitor the situation in light of following the review request.	
	Delivering Effective Safeguarding Services	To receive a regular update including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on the development of the MASH. 	Standing item to monitor safeguarding services	Head of Social Care and Intervention/
	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing Item To enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Children's Services Performance & Information Team
	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted reports, School Improvement	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports Achievement Gap Review	Standing item to enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Head of Learning & Achievement
	Children's Services O and S Committee Forward Programme	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
23 Feb 2016	Delivering Effective Safeguarding Services	To receive a regular update including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an update on the recruitment and retention strategy. 	Standing item to monitor safeguarding services	Head of Social Care and Intervention/
	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing Item To enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Children's Services Performance & Information Team
	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted reports, School Improvement	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item to enable the Committee to assess performance and identify areas of concern	Head of Learning & Achievement
	Children's Services O and S Committee Forward Programme	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing Item	Democratic Services

This page is intentionally left blank